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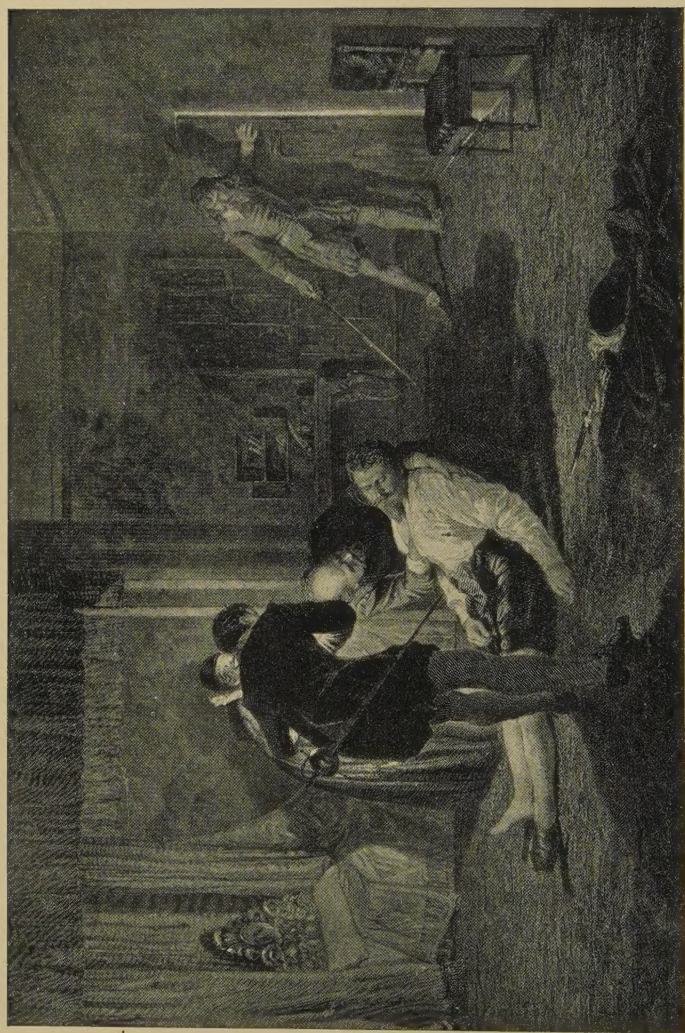


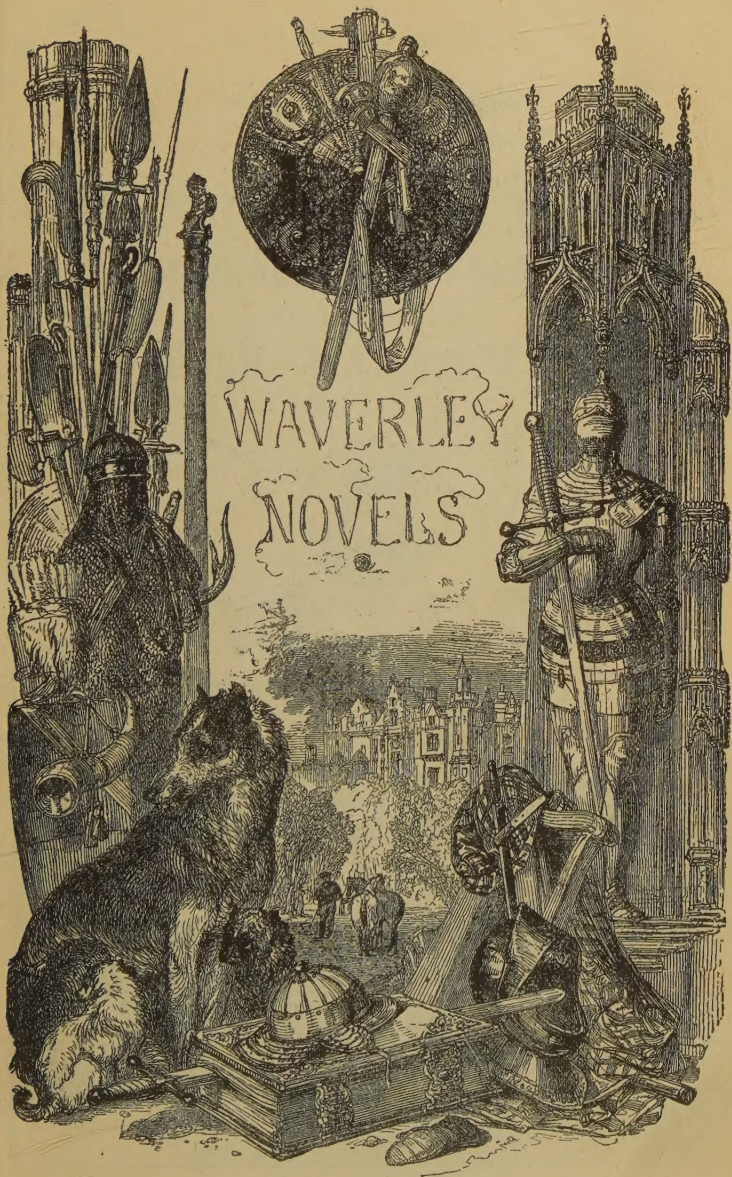












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WAVERLEY NOVELS

SIR WALTER SCOTT

THE BRIDE OF  
LAMMERMOOR  
—  
THE TALISMAN

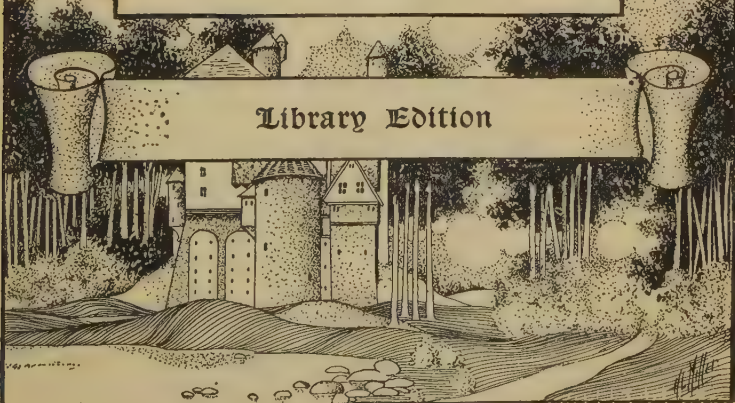


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## INTRODUCTION TO THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR

THE Author, on a former occasion,<sup>1</sup> declined giving the real source from which he drew the tragic subject of this history, because, though occurring at a distant period, it might possibly be displeasing to the feelings of the descendants of the parties.<sup>2</sup> But as he finds an account of the circumstances given in the Notes to Law's *Memorials*,<sup>3</sup> by his ingenious friend, Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq., and also indicated in his reprint of the Rev. Mr. Symson's poems appended to the *Description of Galloway*, as the original of the *Bride of Lammermoor*, the Author feels himself now at liberty to tell the tale as he had it from connexions of his own, who lived very near the period, and were closely related to the family of the bride.

It is well known that the family of Dalrymple, which has produced, within the space of two centuries, as many men of talent, civil and military, and of literary, political, and professional eminence, as any house in Scotland, first rose into distinction in the person of James Dalrymple, one of the most eminent lawyers that ever lived, though the labours of his powerful mind were unhappily exercised on a subject so limited as Scottish jurisprudence, on which he has composed an admirable work.

He married Margaret, daughter to Ross of Balniel, with whom he obtained a considerable estate. She was an able, politic, and high-minded woman, so successful in what she undertook, that the vulgar, no way partial to her husband or her family, imputed her success to necromancy. According to the popular belief,

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<sup>1</sup> See Introduction to the *Chronicles of the Canongate*.

<sup>2</sup> See The Family of Stair. Note 1.

<sup>3</sup> Law's *Memorials*, p. 226.

this Dame Margaret purchased the temporal prosperity of her family from the Master whom she served under a singular condition, which is thus narrated by the historian of her grandsor., the great Earl of Stair : — ‘She lived to a great age, and at her death desired that she might not be put under ground, but that her coffin should be placed upright on one end of it, promising that while she remained in that situation the Dalrymples should continue in prosperity. What was the old lady’s motive for such a request, or whether she really made such a promise, I cannot take upon me to determine ; but it is certain her coffin stands upright in the isle of the church of Kirkliston, the burial-place of the family.’<sup>1</sup> The talents of this accomplished race were sufficient to have accounted for the dignities which many members of the family attained, without any supernatural assistance. But their extraordinary prosperity was attended by some equally singular family misfortunes, of which that which befell their eldest daughter was at once unaccountable and melancholy.

Miss Janet Dalrymple, daughter of the first Lord Stair and Dame Margaret Ross, had engaged herself without the knowledge of her parents to the Lord Rutherford, who was not acceptable to them either on account of his political principles or his want of fortune. The young couple broke a piece of gold together, and pledged their troth in the most solemn manner ; and it is said the young lady imprecated dreadful evils on herself should she break her plighted faith. Shortly after, a suitor who was favoured by Lord Stair, and still more so by his lady, paid his addresses to Miss Dalrymple. The young lady refused the proposal, and being pressed on the subject, confessed her secret engagement. Lady Stair, a woman accustomed to universal submission, for even her husband did not dare to contradict her, treated this objection as a trifle, and insisted upon her daughter yielding her consent to marry the new suitor, David Dunbar, son and heir to David Dunbar of Baldoon, in Wigtonshire. The first lover, a man of very high spirit, then interfered by letter, and insisted on the right he had acquired by his troth plighted with the young lady. Lady Stair sent him for answer, that her daughter, sensible of her undutiful behaviour in entering into a contract unsanctioned by her parents, had retracted her unlawful vow, and now refused to fulfil her engagement with him.

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<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of John Earl of Stair*, by an Impartial Hand. London, printed for C. Cobbet, p. 7.



The lover, in return, declined positively to receive such an answer from any one but his mistress in person ; and as she had to deal with a man who was both of a most determined character and of too high condition to be trifled with, Lady Stair was obliged to consent to an interview between Lord Rutherford and her daughter. But she took care to be present in person, and argued the point with the disappointed and incensed lover with pertinacity equal to his own. She particularly insisted on the Levitical law, which declares that a woman shall be free of a vow which her parents dissent from. This is the passage of Scripture she founded on :—

‘If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond ; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.

‘If a woman also vow a vow unto the Lord, and bind herself by a bond, being in her father’s house in her youth ;

‘And her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his peace at her: then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand.

‘But if her father disallow her in the day that he heareth ; not any of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand : and the Lord shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her.’ — Numbers xxx. 2–5.

While the mother insisted on these topics, the lover in vain conjured the daughter to declare her own opinion and feelings. She remained totally overwhelmed, as it seemed — mute, pale, and motionless as a statue. Only at her mother’s command, sternly uttered, she summoned strength enough to restore to her plighted suitor the piece of broken gold which was the emblem of her troth. On this he burst forth into a tremendous passion, took leave of the mother with maledictions, and as he left the apartment, turned back to say to his weak, if not fickle, mistress, ‘For you, madam, you will be a world’s wonder’ ; a phrase by which some remarkable degree of calamity is usually implied. He went abroad, and returned not again. If the last Lord Rutherford was the unfortunate party, he must have been the third who bore that title, and who died in 1685.

The marriage betwixt Janet Dalrymple and David Dunbar of Baldoon now went forward, the bride showing no repugnance, but being absolutely passive in everything her mother commanded or advised. On the day of the marriage, which, as was

then usual, was celebrated by a great assemblage of friends and relations, she was the same—sad, silent, and resigned, as it seemed, to her destiny. A lady, very nearly connected with the family, told the Author that she had conversed on the subject with one of the brothers of the bride, a mere lad at the time, who had ridden before his sister to church. He said her hand, which lay on his as she held her arm round his waist, was as cold and damp as marble. But, full of his new dress and the part he acted in the procession, the circumstance, which he long afterwards remembered with bitter sorrow and compunction, made no impression on him at the time.

The bridal feast was followed by dancing. The bride and bridegroom retired as usual, when of a sudden the most wild and piercing cries were heard from the nuptial chamber. It was then the custom, to prevent any coarse pleasantry which old times perhaps admitted, that the key of the nuptial chamber should be entrusted to the bridegroom. He was called upon, but refused at first to give it up, till the shrieks became so hideous that he was compelled to hasten with others to learn the cause. On opening the door, they found the bridegroom lying across the threshold, dreadfully wounded, and streaming with blood. The bride was then sought for. She was found in the corner of the large chimney, having no covering save her shift, and that dabbled in gore. There she sat grinning at them, mopping and mowing, as I heard the expression used; in a word, absolutely insane. The only words she spoke were, 'Tak up your bonny bridegroom.' She survived this horrible scene little more than a fortnight, having been married on the 24th of August, and dying on the 12th of September 1669.

The unfortunate Baldoon recovered from his wounds, but sternly prohibited all inquiries respecting the manner in which he had received them. 'If a lady,' he said, 'asked him any questions upon the subject, he would neither answer her nor speak to her again while he lived; if a gentleman, he would consider it as a mortal affront, and demand satisfaction as having received such.' He did not very long survive the dreadful catastrophe, having met with a fatal injury by a fall from his horse, as he rode between Leith and Holyrood House, of which he died the next day, 28th March 1682. Thus a few years removed all the principal actors in this frightful tragedy.

Various reports went abroad on this mysterious affair, many of them very inaccurate, though they could hardly be said to be exaggerated. It was difficult at that time to become acquainted with the history of a Scottish family above the lower rank; and strange things sometimes took place there, into which even the law did not scrupulously inquire.

The credulous Mr. Law says, generally, that the Lord President Stair had a daughter, who, 'being married, the night she was bride in [that is, bedded bride] was taken from her bridegroom and harled [dragged] through the house (by spirits, we are given to understand), and soon afterwards died.' Another daughter, he says, 'was possessed by an evil spirit.'

My friend, Mr. Sharpe, gives another edition of the tale. According to his information, it was the bridegroom who wounded the bride. The marriage, according to this account, had been against her mother's inclination, who had given her consent in these ominous words: 'You may marry him, but soon shall you repent it.'

I find still another account darkly insinuated in some highly scurrilous and abusive verses, of which I have an original copy. They are docketed as being written 'Upon the late Viscount Stair and his family, by Sir William Hamilton of Whitelaw. The marginals by William Dunlop, writer in Edinburgh, a son of the Laird of Househill, and nephew to the said Sir William Hamilton.' There was a bitter and personal quarrel and rivalry betwixt the author of this libel, a name which it richly deserves, and Lord President Stair; and the lampoon, which is written with much more malice than art, bears the following motto:—

Stair's neck, mind, wife, sons, grandson, and the rest,  
Are wry, false, witch, pests, parricide, possessed.

This malignant satirist, who calls up all the misfortunes of the family, does not forget the fatal bridal of Baldoon. He seems, though his verses are as obscure as unpoetical, to intimate that the violence done to the bridegroom was by the intervention of the foul fiend, to whom the young lady had resigned herself, in case she should break her contract with her first lover. His hypothesis is inconsistent with the account given in the note upon Law's *Memorials*, but easily reconcilable to the family tradition.

In al Stair's offspring we no difference know,  
 They doe the females as the males bestow;  
 So he of's daughter's marriage gave the ward,  
 Like a true vassal, to Glenluce's Laird;  
 He knew what she did to her suitor plight,  
 If she her faith to Rutherford should slight,  
 Which, like his own, for greed he broke outright. }  
 Nick did Baldoon's posterior right deride,  
 And, as first substitute, did seize the bride;  
 Whate'er he to his mistress did or said,  
 He threw the bridegroom from the nuptial bed,  
 Into the chinnery did so his rival maul,  
 His bruised bones ne'er were cured but by the fall.<sup>1</sup>

One of the marginal notes ascribed to William Dunlop applies to the above lines. 'She had betrothed herself to Lord Rutherford under horrid imprecations, and afterwards married Baldoon, his nevy, and her mother was the cause of her breach of faith.'

The same tragedy is alluded to in the following couplet and note:—

What train of curses that base brood pursues,  
 When the young nephew weds old uncle's spouse.

The note on the word 'uncle' explains it as meaning 'Rutherford, who should have married the Lady Baldoon, was Baldoon's uncle.' The poetry of this satire on Lord Stair and his family was, as already noticed, written by Sir William Hamilton of Whitelaw, a rival of Lord Stair for the situation of President of the Court of Session; a person much inferior to that great lawyer in talents, and equally ill-treated by the calumny or just satire of his contemporaries as an unjust and partial judge. Some of the notes are by that curious and laborious antiquary, Robert Milne, who, as a virulent Jacobite, willingly lent a hand to blacken the family of Stair.<sup>2</sup>

Another poet of the period, with a very different purpose, has left an elegy, in which he darkly hints at and bemoans the fate of the ill-starred young person, whose very uncommon calamity Whitelaw, Dunlop, and Milne thought a fitting subject for buffoonery and ribaldry. This bard of milder mood was Andrew Symson, before the Revolution minister of Kirkinner, in Galloway, and after his expulsion as an Episcopalian

<sup>1</sup> The fall from his horse, by which he was killed.

<sup>2</sup> I have compared the satire, which occurs in the first volume of the curious little collection called a *Book of Scottish Pasquils*, 1827, with that which has a more full text and more extended notes, and which is in my own possession, by gift of Thomas Thomson, Esq., Register-Depute. In the second *Book of Pasquils*, p. 72, is a most abusive epitaph on Sir James Hamilton of Whitelaw.



following the humble occupation of a printer in Edinburgh. He furnished the family of Baldoon, with which he appears to have been intimate, with an elegy on the tragic event in their family. In this piece he treats the mournful occasion of the bride's death with mysterious solemnity.

The verses bear this title, 'On the unexpected death of the virtuous Lady Mrs. Janet Dalrymple, Lady Baldoon, younger,' and afford us the precise dates of the catastrophe, which could not otherwise have been easily ascertained. 'Nupta August 12. Domum Ducta August 24. Obiit September 12. Sepult. September 30, 1669.' The form of the elegy is a dialogue betwixt a passenger and a domestic servant. The first, recollecting that he had passed that way lately, and seen all around enlivened by the appearances of mirth and festivity, is desirous to know what had changed so gay a scene into mourning. We preserve the reply of the servant as a specimen of Mr. Symson's verses, which are not of the first quality :—

Sir, 't is truth you 've told.  
 We did enjoy great mirth ; but now, ah me !  
 Our joyful song's turn'd to an elegie.  
 A virtuous lady, not long since a bride,  
 Was to a hopeful plant by marriage tied,  
 And brought home hither. We did all rejoice,  
 Even for her sake. But presently our voice  
 Was turn'd to mourning for that little time  
 That she'd enjoy : she waned in her prime,  
 For Atropos, with her impartial knife,  
 Soon cut her thread, and therewithal her life ;  
 And for the time we may it well remember,  
 It being in unfortunate September ;  
 Where we must leave her till the resurrection,  
 'T is then the Saints enjoy their full perfection.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Symson also poured forth his elegiac strains upon the fate of the widowed bridegroom, on which subject, after a long and querulous effusion, the poet arrives at the sound conclusion, that if Baldoon had walked on foot, which it seems was his general custom, he would have escaped perishing by a fall from horseback. As the work in which it occurs is so scarce as almost to be unique, and as it gives us the most full account of one of the actors in this tragic tale which we have rehearsed,

<sup>1</sup> This elegy is reprinted in the appendix to a topographical work by the same author, entitled *A Large Description of Galloway*, by Andrew Symson, Minister of Kirkinner, 8vo. Taits, Edinburgh, 1823. The reverend gentleman's elegies are extremely rare, nor did the Author ever see a copy but his own, which is bound up with the *Tripatriarchicon*, a religious poem from the Biblical History, by the same author.

we will, at the risk of being tedious, insert some short specimens of Mr. Symson's composition. It is entitled —

'A Funeral Elegie, occasioned by the sad and much lamented death of that worthily respected, and very much accomplished gentleman, David Dunbar, younger, of Baldoon, only son and apparent heir to the right worshipful Sir David Dunbar of Baldoon, Knight Baronet. He departed this life on March 28, 1682, having received a bruise by a fall, as he was riding the day preceding betwixt Leith and Holyrood House; and was honourably interred in the Abbey Church of Holyrood House, on April 4, 1682.'

Men might, and very justly too, conclude  
Me guilty of the worst ingratitude,  
Should I be silent, or should I forbear  
At this sad accident to shed a tear;  
A tear! said I? ah! that's a petit thing,  
A very lean, slight, slender offering,  
Too mean, I'm sure, for me, wherewith t'attend  
The unexpected funeral of my friend:  
A glass of briny tears charged up to th' brim,  
Would be too few for me to shed for him.

The poet proceeds to state his intimacy with the deceased, and the constancy of the young man's attendance on public worship, which was regular, and had such effect upon two or three others that were influenced by his example,

So that my Muse 'gainst Priscian avers,  
He, only he, *were* my parishioners;  
Yea, and my only hearers.

He then describes the deceased in person and manners, from which it appears that more accomplishments were expected in the composition of a fine gentleman in ancient than modern times:

His body, though not very large or tall,  
Was sprightly, active, yea and strong withal.  
His constitution was, if right I've guess'd,  
Blood mixt with choler, said to be the best.  
In 's gesture, converse, speech, discourse, attire,  
He practis'd that which wise men still admire,  
Commend, and recommend. What's that? you'll say,  
'Tis this: he ever choos'd the middle way  
'Twixt both th' extremes. Almost in ev'ry thing  
He did the like, 't is worth our noticing:  
Sparing, yet not a niggard; liberal,  
And yet not lavish or a prodigal,  
As knowing when to spend and when to spare;  
And that's a lesson which not many are

Acquainted with. He bashful was, yet daring  
 When he saw cause, and yet therein but sparing ;  
 Familiar, yet not common, for he knew  
 To condescend, and keep his distance too.  
 He us'd, and that most commonly, to go  
 On foot ; I wish that he had still done so.  
 Th' affairs of court were unto him well known ;  
 And yet meanwhile he slighted not his own.  
 He knew full well how to behave at court,  
 And yet but seldom did thereto resort ;  
 But lov'd the country life, choos'd to inure  
 Himself to past'rage and agriculture ;  
 Proving, improving, ditching, trenching, draining,  
 Viewing, reviewing, and by those means gaining ;  
 Planting, transplanting, levelling, erecting  
 Walls, chambers, houses, terraces ; projecting  
 Now this, now that device, this draught, that measure,  
 That might advance his profit with his pleasure.  
 Quick in his bargains, honest in commerce,  
 Just in his dealings, being much averse  
 From quirks of law, still ready to refer  
 His cause t' an honest country arbiter.  
 He was acquainted with cosmography,  
 Arithmetic, and modern history ;  
 With architecture and such arts as these,  
 Which I may call specifick sciences  
 Fit for a gentleman ; and surely he  
 That knows them not, at least in some degree,  
 May brook the title, but he wants the thing,  
 Is but a shadow scarce worth noticing.  
 He learned the French, be 't spoken to his praise,  
 In very little more than fourty days.'

Then comes the full burst of woe, in which, instead of saying  
 much himself, the poet informs us what the ancients would  
 have said on such an occasion :

A heathen poet, at the news, no doubt,  
 Would have exclaimed, and furiously cry'd out  
 Against the fates, the destinies and starrs,  
 What ! this the effect of planetarie warrs !  
 We might have seen him rage and rave, yea worse,  
 'Tis very like we might have heard him curse  
 The year, the month, the day, the hour, the place,  
 The company, the wager, and the race ;  
 Decry all recreations, with the names  
 Of Isthmian, Pythian, and Olympick games ;  
 Exclaim against them all both old and new,  
 Both the Nemæan and the Lethæan too :  
 Adjudge all persons, under highest pain,  
 Always to walk on foot, and then again  
 Order all horses to be hough'd, that we  
 Might never more the like adventure see.

Supposing our readers have had enough of Mr. Symson's verses, and finding nothing more in his poem worthy of transcription, we turn to the tragic story.

It is needless to point out to the intelligent reader that the witchcraft of the mother consisted only in the ascendancy of a powerful mind over a weak and melancholy one, and that the harshness, with which she exercised her superiority in a case of delicacy had driven her daughter first to despair, then to frenzy. Accordingly, the Author has endeavoured to explain the tragic tale on this principle. Whatever resemblance Lady Ashton may be supposed to possess to the celebrated Dame Margaret Ross, the reader must not suppose that there was any idea of tracing the portrait of the first Lord Viscount Stair in the tricky and mean-spirited Sir William Ashton. Lord Stair, whatever might be his moral qualities, was certainly one of the first statesmen and lawyers of his age.

The imaginary castle of Wolf's Crag has been identified by some lover of locality with that of Fast Castle. The Author is not competent to judge of the resemblance betwixt the real and imaginary scene, having never seen Fast Castle except from the sea. But fortalices of this description are found occupying, like ospreys' nests, projecting rocks, or promontories, in many parts of the eastern coast of Scotland, and the position of Fast Castle seems certainly to resemble that of Wolf's Crag as much as any other, while its vicinity to the mountain ridge of Lammermoor renders the assimilation a probable one.

We have only to add, that the death of the unfortunate bridegroom by a fall from horseback has been in the novel transferred to the no less unfortunate lover.<sup>1</sup>

[\* \* It seems proper to append to the Author's Introduction a letter concerning the *Bride of Lammermoor*, addressed, in 1823, to the late Sir James Stewart Denham, of Coltness, by his relation, Sir Robert Dalrymple Horne Elphinstone, of Logie Elphinstone. These baronets were both connected in blood with the unfortunate heroine of the romance. The letter was first published in the *Edinburgh Evening Post* for October 10, 1840.

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<sup>1</sup> See the account of how this novel was composed in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. vi. p. 66 *et seq.*, ed. 1862 (*Laing*).

To GENERAL SIR JAMES STEWART DENHAM, BART.

September 5, 1823.

MY DEAR SIR JAMES, — Various circumstances have occurred which have unavoidably prevented my returning an earlier answer to your queries regarding our unfortunate relative — ‘The Bride of Lammermoor.’ I shall now have much pleasure in complying with your wishes, in as far as an indifferent memory will enable me to do so.

‘The Bride of Baldoon’ (for such has always been her designation in our family) was the Honourable Janet Dalrymple, eldest daughter of our great-great-grandfather, James Viscount of Stair, Lord President of the Court of Session in the reign of William and Mary; sister to the first Earl of that name, and to our great-grandfather the Lord President Sir Hugh Dalrymple of North Berwick; and consequently our great-grand aunt.

She was secretly attached, and had plighted her faith, to the Lord Rutherford, when, under the auspices of her mother, a less amiable, but much more opulent suitor appeared, in the person of David Dunbar, eldest son of Sir David Dunbar of Baldoon (an ancestor of the Selkirk family), whose addresses were, as may be supposed, submitted to with the greatest aversion, from their being ungenerously persisted in after his being informed of her early attachment and solemn engagement. To this man, however, she was ultimately *forced* to give her hand.

The result of this cruel and unnatural sacrifice was nearly, if not exactly, as related by Sir Walter Scott. On the marriage night, soon after the young couple were left alone, violent and continued screams were heard to proceed from the bridal-chamber, and on the door (which was found locked) being forced open, the bridegroom was found extended on the floor, stabbed and weltering in his blood, while the bride sat in the corner of the large fire-place, in a state of the most deplorable frenzy, which continued without any lucid interval until the period of her death. She survived but a short time, during which (with the exception of the few words mentioned by Sir Walter Scott — ‘Ye hae taen up your bonny bridegroom’) she never spoke, and refused all sustenance.

The conclusion drawn from these extraordinary circumstances, and which seems to have been assumed by Sir Walter



as a fact, was, that the forlorn and distracted victim, seeing no other means of escaping from a fate which she beheld with disgust and abhorrence, had in a fit of desperation inflicted the fatal wound upon her selfish and unfeeling husband. But, in justice to the memory of our unhappy relative, we may be permitted to regret Sir Walter's not having been made acquainted with a tradition long current in the part of the country where the tragical event took place, — namely, that from the window having been found open, it was conjectured that the lover had, during the bustle and confusion occasioned by the preparations for the marriage feast, and perhaps by the connivance of some servant of the family, contrived to gain admission and to secrete himself in the bridal chamber, from whence he had made his escape into the garden, after having fought with and severely wounded his successful rival — a conclusion strengthened by other concurring circumstances, and rendered more probable by the fact of young Baldoon having, to his latest breath, obstinately refused to give any explanation on the subject, and which might well justify a belief that he was actuated by a desire of concealing the particulars of a *rencontre*, the causes and consequences of which he might justly consider as equally discreditable to himself. The unfortunate lover was said to have disappeared immediately after the catastrophe in a manner somewhat mysterious ; but this part of the story has escaped my recollection.

While on the subject of this calamitous event, I cannot help offering some observations on the principal personages introduced in Sir Walter Scott's narrative, all of whom are more or less interesting both to you and me.

The character of Sir William Ashton certainly cannot be considered as a fair representation of our eminent and respectable ancestor Lord Stair, to whom he bears little resemblance, either as a politician or a gentleman ; and Sir Walter would seem wishful to avoid the application, when he says that, on acquiring the ancient seat of the Lords of Ravenswood, Sir William had removed certain old family portraits and replaced them by 'those of King William and Queen Mary, and of Sir Thomas Hope and Lord Stair, two distinguished Scots lawyers ;' but on this point some less ambiguous intimation would have been very desirable, and having in the character of Lucy Ashton stuck so closely to the character of the daughter, the Author should, in fairness, have been at more pains to prevent that of the Lord Keeper from being considered as an equally fair repre-

sentation of the father ; an omission of which the descendants of Lord Stair have, I think, some reason to complain.

In Lady Ashton, the character of our great-great-grandmother seems in many respects more faithfully delineated, or at least less misrepresented. She was an ambitious and interested woman, of a masculine character and understanding, and the transaction regarding her daughter's marriage was believed to have been hers, and not her husband's, who, from his numerous important avocations as Lord President, Privy Councillor, and active assistant in the management of Scottish affairs, had probably neither time nor inclination to take much personal concern in family arrangements.

The situation of young Ravenswood bears a sufficiently strong resemblance to that of the Lord Rutherford, who was an amiable and high-spirited young man, nobly born and destitute of fortune, and who, if the above account is to be credited, as to the manner and *place* in which he thought proper to chastise his successful rival, seems to have been not ill cut out for a hero of romance. And as to young Baldoon, of whom little is known beyond what has been related above, he seems to have a more respectable representation than deserved in the person of Bucklaw.

The story was, I have understood, communicated to Sir Walter Scott by our worthy friend, the late Mrs. Murray Keith, who seems to have been well acquainted with all the particulars, excepting those to which I have more especially alluded ; which, as a friend and connexion of the family, had she known, she would not have failed to mention ; and in as far as his information went (with the exception of his having changed the scene of action from the *west coast to the east*), Sir Walter seems to have adhered to facts as closely as could well be expected in a work bearing the general stamp of fiction. But, if the memory of so disastrous and distressing a family anecdote was to be preserved and handed down to posterity in a story so singularly affecting, and by an author the most popular of our own or any other age, while it was surely of importance to avoid any such offensive misrepresentation of character as that to which I have alluded, it was at the same time much to be lamented that the Author of the *Bride of Lammermoor* should have been ignorant of a tradition so truly worthy of credit ; throwing so much satisfactory light on an event equally tragical and mysterious, and which, while a judicious management of the circumstances might have increased rather than diminished the interest of

the narrative, would have left a less painful impression regarding our unhappy and unfortunate relative, 'The Bride Baldoon.'

With best regards from all here, to you and Lady Stewart,  
I remain, my dear Sir James,  
Ever most truly yours,

ROBERT DALRYMPLE HORNE ELPHINSTON

# THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR

## CHAPTER I

By cauk and keel to win your bread,  
Wi' whigmaleeries for them wha need,  
Whilk is a gentle trade indeed  
To carry the gaberlunzie on.

*Old Song.*

FEW have been in my secret while I was compiling these narratives, nor is it probable that they will ever become public during the life of their author. Even were that event to happen, I am not ambitious of the honoured distinction, *digito monstrari*. I confess that, were it safe to cherish such dreams at all, I should more enjoy the thought of remaining behind the curtain unseen, like the ingenious manager of Punch and his wife Joan, and enjoying the astonishment and conjectures of my audience. Then might I, perchance, hear the productions of the obscure Peter Pattieson praised by the judicious and admired by the feeling, engrossing the young and attracting even the old; while the critic traced their fame up to some name of literary celebrity, and the question when, and by whom, these tales were written filled up the pause of conversation in a hundred circles and coteries. This I may never enjoy during my lifetime; but farther than this, I am certain, my vanity should never induce me to aspire.

I am too stubborn in habits, and too little polished in manners, to envy or aspire to the honours assigned to my literary contemporaries. I could not think a whit more highly of myself were I even found worthy to 'come in place as a lion' for a winter in the great metropolis. I could not rise, turn round, and show all my honours, from the shaggy mane to the lifted tail, 'roar you an 'twere any nightingale,' and so lie down

again like a well-behaved beast of show, and all at the cheap and easy rate of a cup of coffee and a slice of bread and butter as thin as a wafer. And I could ill stomach the fulsome flattery with which the lady of the evening indulges her show-monsters on such occasions, as she crams her parrots with sugar-plums, in order to make them talk before company. I cannot be tempted to 'come aloft' for these marks of distinction, and, like imprisoned Samson, I would rather remain — if such must be the alternative — all my life in the mill-house, grinding for my very bread, than be brought forth to make sport for the Philistine lords and ladies. This proceeds from no dislike, real or affected, to the aristocracy of these realms. But they have their place, and I have mine; and, like the iron and earthen vessels in the old fable, we can scarce come into collision without my being the sufferer in every sense. It may be otherwise with the sheets which I am now writing. These may be opened and laid aside at pleasure; by amusing themselves with the perusal, the great will excite no false hopes; by neglecting or condemning them, they will inflict no pain; and how seldom can they converse with those whose minds have toiled for their delight without doing either the one or the other.

In the better and wiser tone of feeling which Ovid only expresses in one line to retract in that which follows, I can address these quires —

*Parve, nec invideo, sine me, liber, ibis in urbem.*

Nor do I join the regret of the illustrious exile, that he himself could not in person accompany the volume, which he sent forth to the mart of literature, pleasure, and luxury. Were there not a hundred similar instances on record, the fate of my poor friend and school-fellow, Dick Tinto, would be sufficient to warn me against seeking happiness in the celebrity which attaches itself to a successful cultivator of the fine arts.

Dick Tinto, when he wrote himself artist, was wont to derive his origin from the ancient family of Tinto, of that ilk, in Lanarkshire, and occasionally hinted that he had somewhat derogated from his gentle blood in using the pencil for his principal means of support. But if Dick's pedigree was correct, some of his ancestors must have suffered a more heavy declension, since the good man his father executed the necessary, and, I trust, the honest, but certainly not very distinguished, employment of tailor in ordinary to the village of Langdirdum in the west. Under his humble roof was Richard born, and to his father's

humble trade was Richard, greatly contrary to his inclination, early indentured. Old Mr. Tinto had, however, no reason to congratulate himself upon having compelled the youthful genius of his son to forsake its natural bent. He fared like the school-boy who attempts to stop with his finger the spout of a water cistern, while the stream, exasperated at this compression, escapes by a thousand uncalculated spirts, and wets him all over for his pains. Even so fared the senior Tinto, when his hopeful apprentice not only exhausted all the chalk in making sketches upon the shopboard, but even executed several caricatures of his father's best customers, who began loudly to murmur, that it was too hard to have their persons deformed by the vestments of the father, and to be at the same time turned into ridicule by the pencil of the son. This led to discredit and loss of practice, until the old tailor, yielding to destiny and to the entreaties of his son, permitted him to attempt his fortune in a line for which he was better qualified.

There was about this time, in the village of Langdirdum, a peripatetic brother of the brush, who exercised his vocation *sub Jove frigido*, the object of admiration to all the boys of the village, but especially to Dick Tinto. The age had not yet adopted, amongst other unworthy retrenchments, that illiberal measure of economy which, supplying by written characters the lack of symbolical representation, closes one open and easily accessible avenue of instruction and emolument against the students of the fine arts. It was not yet permitted to write upon the plastered doorway of an alehouse, or the suspended sign of an inn, 'The Old Magpie,' or 'The Saracen's Head,' substituting that cold description for the lively effigies of the plumed chatterer, or the turban'd frown of the terrific soldan. That early and more simple age considered alike the necessities of all ranks, and depicted the symbols of good cheer so as to be obvious to all capacities; well judging that a man who could not read a syllable might nevertheless love a pot of good ale as well as his better-educated neighbours, or even as the parson himself. Acting upon this liberal principle, publicans as yet hung forth the painted emblems of their cailing, and sign-painters, if they seldom feasted, did not at least absolutely starve.

To a worthy of this decayed profession, as we have already intimated, Dick Tinto became an assistant; and thus, as is not unusual among heaven-born geniuses in this department of the fine arts, began to paint before he had any notion of drawing.



His talent for observing nature soon induced him to rectify the errors, and soar above the instructions, of his teacher. He particularly shone in painting horses, that being a favourite sign in the Scottish villages ; and, in tracing his progress, it is beautiful to observe how by degrees he learned to shorten the backs and prolong the legs of these noble animals, until they came to look less like crocodiles, and more like nags. Detraction, which always pursues merit with strides proportioned to its advancement, has indeed alleged that Dick once upon a time painted a horse with five legs, instead of four. I might have rested his defence upon the license allowed to that branch of his profession, which, as it permits all sorts of singular and irregular combinations, may be allowed to extend itself so far as to bestow a limb supernumerary on a favourite subject. But the cause of a deceased friend is sacred ; and I disdain to bottom it so superficially. I have visited the sign in question, which yet swings exalted in the village of Langdirdum ; and I am ready to depone upon oath that what has been idly mistaken or misrepresented as being the fifth leg of the horse, is, in fact, the tail of that quadruped, and, considered with reference to the posture in which he is delineated, forms a circumstance introduced and managed with great and successful, though daring, art. The nag being represented in a rampant or rearing posture, the tail, which is prolonged till it touches the ground, appears to form a *point d'appui*, and gives the firmness of a tripod to the figure, without which it would be difficult to conceive, placed as the feet are, how the courser could maintain his ground without tumbling backwards. This bold conception has fortunately fallen into the custody of one by whom it is duly valued ; for, when Dick, in his more advanced state of proficiency, became dubious of the propriety of so daring a deviation from the established rules of art, and was desirous to execute a picture of the publican himself in exchange for this juvenile production, the courteous offer was declined by his judicious employer, who had observed, it seems, that when his ale failed to do its duty in conciliating his guests, one glance at his sign was sure to put them in good humour.

It would be foreign to my present purpose to trace the steps by which Dick Tinto improved his touch, and corrected, by the rules of art, the luxuriance of a fervid imagination. The scales fell from his eyes on viewing the sketches of a contemporary, the Scottish Teniers, as Wilkie has been deservedly styled. He threw down the brush, took up the crayons, and, amid hunger



and toil, and suspense and uncertainty, pursued the path of his profession under better auspices than those of his original master. Still the first rude emanations of his genius, like the nursery rhymes of Pope, could these be recovered, will be dear to the companions of Dick Tinto's youth. There is a tankard and gridiron painted over the door of an obscure change-house in the Back Wynd of Gandercleugh — But I feel I must tear myself from the subject, or dwell on it too long.

Amid his wants and struggles, Dick Tinto had recourse, like his brethren, to levying that tax upon the vanity of mankind which he could not extract from their taste and liberality — in a word, he painted portraits. It was in this more advanced state of proficiency, when Dick had soared above his original line of business, and highly disdained any allusion to it, that, after having been estranged for several years, we again met in the village of Gandercleugh, I holding my present situation, and Dick painting copies of the human face divine at a guinea per head. This was a small premium, yet, in the first burst of business, it more than sufficed for all Dick's moderate wants; so that he occupied an apartment at the Wallace Inn, cracked his jest with impunity even upon mine host himself, and lived in respect and observance with the chambermaid, hostler, and waiter.

Those halcyon days were too serene to last long. When his honour the Laird of Gandercleugh, with his wife and three daughters, the minister, the gauger, mine esteemed patron Mr. Jedediah Cleishbotham, and some round dozen of the feuars and farmers, had been consigned to immortality by Tinto's brush, custom began to slacken, and it was impossible to wring more than crowns and half-crowns from the hard hands of the peasants whose ambition led them to Dick's painting-room.

Still, though the horizon was overclouded, no storm for some time ensued. Mine host had Christian faith with a lodger who had been a good paymaster as long as he had the means. And from a portrait of our landlord himself, grouped with his wife and daughters, in the style of Rubens, which suddenly appeared in the best parlour, it was evident that Dick had found some mode of bartering art for the necessities of life.

Nothing, however, is more precarious than resources of this nature. It was observed that Dick became in his turn the whetstone of mine host's wit, without venturing either at defence or retaliation; that his easel was transferred to a

garret-room, in which there was scarce space for it to stand upright; and that he no longer ventured to join the weekly club, of which he had been once the life and soul. In short, Dick Tinto's friends feared that he had acted like the animal called the sloth, which, having eaten up the last green leaf upon the tree where it has established itself, ends by tumbling down from the top, and dying of inanition. I ventured to hint this to Dick, recommended his transferring the exercise of his inestimable talent to some other sphere, and forsaking the common which he might be said to have eaten bare.

'There is an obstacle to my change of residence,' said my friend, grasping my hand with a look of solemnity.

'A bill due to my landlord, I am afraid?' replied I, with heartfelt sympathy; 'if any, part of my slender means can assist in this emergence——'

'No, by the soul of Sir Joshua!' answered the generous youth, 'I will never involve a friend in the consequences of my own misfortune. There is a mode by which I can regain my liberty; and to creep even through a common sewer is better than to remain in prison.'

I did not perfectly understand what my friend meant. The muse of painting appeared to have failed him, and what other goddess he could invoke in his distress was a mystery to me. We parted, however, without further explanation, and I did not again see him until three days after, when he summoned me to partake of the 'foy' with which his landlord proposed to regale him ere his departure for Edinburgh.

I found Dick in high spirits, whistling while he buckled the small knapsack which contained his colours, brushes, pallets, and clean shirt. That he parted on the best terms with mine host was obvious from the cold beef set forth in the low parlour, flanked by two mugs of admirable brown stout; and I own my curiosity was excited concerning the means through which the face of my friend's affairs had been so suddenly improved. I did not suspect Dick of dealing with the devil, and by what earthly means he had extricated himself thus happily I was at a total loss to conjecture.

He perceived my curiosity, and took me by the hand. 'My friend,' he said, 'fain would I conceal, even from you, the degradation to which it has been necessary to submit, in order to accomplish an honourable retreat from Gandercleugh. But what avails attempting to conceal that which must needs betray itself even by its superior excellence? All the village—all the

parish — all the world — will soon discover to what poverty has reduced Richard Tinto.'

A sudden thought here struck me. I had observed that our landlord wore, on that memorable morning, a pair of bran new velveteens, instead of his ancient thicksets.

'What,' said I, drawing my right hand, with the forefinger and thumb pressed together, nimbly from my right haunch to my left shoulder, 'you have condescended to resume the paternal arts to which you were first bred — long stitches, ha, Dick?'

He repelled this unlucky conjecture with a frown and a pshaw, indicative of indignant contempt, and leading me into another room, showed me, resting against the wall, the majestic head of Sir William Wallace, grim as when severed from the trunk by the orders of the felon Edward.

The painting was executed on boards of a substantial thickness, and the top decorated with irons, for suspending the honoured effigy upon a signpost.

'There,' he said, 'my friend, stands the honour of Scotland, and my shame; yet not so — rather the shame of those who, instead of encouraging art in its proper sphere, reduce it to these unbecoming and unworthy extremities.'

I endeavoured to smooth the ruffled feelings of my misused and indignant friend. I reminded him that he ought not, like the stag in the fable, to despise the quality which had extricated him from difficulties, in which his talents, as a portrait or landscape painter, had been found unavailing. Above all, I praised the execution, as well as conception, of his painting, and reminded him that, far from feeling dishonoured by so superb a specimen of his talents being exposed to the general view of the public, he ought rather to congratulate himself upon the augmentation of his celebrity to which its public exhibition must necessarily give rise.

'You are right, my friend — you are right,' replied poor Dick, his eye kindling with enthusiasm; 'why should I shun the name of an — an — (he hesitated for a phrase) — an out-of-doors artist? Hogarth has introduced himself in that character in one of his best engravings; Domenichino, or somebody else, in ancient times, Morland in our own, have exercised their talents in this manner. And wherefore limit to the rich and higher classes alone the delight which the exhibition of works of art is calculated to inspire into all classes? Statues are placed in the open air, why should Painting be more nig-gardly in displaying her masterpieces than her sister Sculpture?'

And yet, my friend, we must part suddenly ; the carpenter is coming in an hour to put up the — the emblem ; and truly, with all my philosophy, and your consolatory encouragement to boot, I would rather wish to leave Gandercleugh before that operation commences.'

We partook of our genial host's parting banquet, and I escorted Dick on his walk to Edinburgh. We parted about a mile from the village, just as we heard the distant cheer of the boys which accompanied the mounting of the new symbol of the Wallace Head. Dick Tinto mended his pace to get out of hearing, so little had either early practice or recent philosophy reconciled him to the character of a sign-painter.

In Edinburgh, Dick's talents were discovered and appreciated, and he received dinners and hints from several distinguished judges of the fine arts. But these gentlemen dispensed their criticism more willingly than their cash, and Dick thought he needed cash more than criticism. He therefore sought London, the universal mart of talent, and where, as is usual in general marts of most descriptions, much more of each commodity is exposed to sale than can ever find purchasers.

Dick, who, in serious earnest, was supposed to have considerable natural talents for his profession, and whose vain and sanguine disposition never permitted him to doubt for a moment of ultimate success, threw himself headlong into the crowd which jostled and struggled for notice and preferment. He elbowed others, and was elbowed himself ; and finally, by dint of intrepidity, fought his way into some notice, painted for the prize at the Institution, had pictures at the exhibition at Somerset House, and damned the hanging committee. But poor Dick was doomed to lose the field he fought so gallantly. In the fine arts, there is scarce an alternative betwixt distinguished success and absolute failure ; and as Dick's zeal and industry were unable to ensure the first, he fell into the distresses which, in his condition, were the natural consequences of the latter alternative. He was for a time patronised by one or two of those judicious persons who make a virtue of being singular, and of pitching their own opinions against those of the world in matters of taste and criticism. But they soon tired of poor Tinto, and laid him down as a load, upon the principle on which a spoilt child throws away its plaything. Misery, I fear, took him up, and accompanied him to a premature grave, to which he was carried from an obscure lodging in Swallow Street, where he had been dunned by his landlady within doors, and

watched by bailiffs without, until death came to his relief. A corner of the *Morning Post* noticed his death, generously adding, that his manner displayed considerable genius, though his style was rather sketchy; and referred to an advertisement, which announced that Mr. Varnish, a well-known printseller, had still on hand a very few drawings and paintings by Richard Tinto, Esquire, which those of the nobility and gentry who wish to complete their collections of modern art were invited to visit without delay. So ended Dick Tinto! a lamentable proof of the great truth, that in the fine arts mediocrity is not permitted, and that he who cannot ascend to the very top of the ladder will do well not to put his foot upon it at all.

The memory of Tinto is dear to me, from the recollection of the many conversations which we have had together, most of them turning upon my present task. He was delighted with my progress, and talked of an ornamented and illustrated edition, with heads, vignettes, and *culs de lampe*, all to be designed by his own patriotic and friendly pencil. He prevailed upon an old sergeant of invalids to sit to him in the character of Bothwell, the lifeguard's-man of Charles the Second, and the bellman of Gandercleugh in that of David Deans. But while he thus proposed to unite his own powers with mine for the illustration of these narratives, he mixed many a dose of salutary criticism with the panegyrics which my composition was at times so fortunate as to call forth.

'Your characters,' he said, 'my dear Pattieson, make too much use of the *gob box*; they *patter* too much (an elegant phraseology which Dick had learned while painting the scenes of an itinerant company of players); there is nothing in whole pages but mere chat and dialogue.'

'The ancient philosopher,' said I in reply, 'was wont to say, "Speak, that I may know thee"; and how is it possible for an author to introduce his *personæ dramatis* to his readers in a more interesting and effectual manner than by the dialogue in which each is represented as supporting his own appropriate character?'

'It is a false conclusion,' said Tinto; 'I hate it, Peter, as I hate an unfilled can. I will grant you, indeed, that speech is a faculty of some value in the intercourse of human affairs, and I will not even insist on the doctrine of that Pythagorean toper, who was of opinion that over a bottle speaking spoiled conversation. But I will not allow that a professor of the fine



arts has occasion to embody the idea of his scene in language, in order to impress upon the reader its reality and its effect. On the contrary, I will be judged by most of your readers, Peter, should these tales ever become public, whether you have not given us a page of talk for every single idea which two words might have communicated, while the posture, and manner, and incident, accurately drawn, and brought out by appropriate colouring, would have preserved all that was worthy of preservation, and saved these everlasting "said he's" and "said she's," with which it has been your pleasure to encumber your pages.'

I replied, 'That he confounded the operations of the pencil and the pen; that the serene and silent art, as painting has been called by one of our first living poets, necessarily appealed to the eye, because it had not the organs for addressing the ear; whereas poetry, or that species of composition which approached to it, lay under the necessity of doing absolutely the reverse, and addressed itself to the ear, for the purpose of exciting that interest which it could not attain through the medium of the eye.'

Dick was not a whit staggered by my argument, which he contended was founded on misrepresentation. 'Description,' he said, 'was to the author of a romance exactly what drawing and tinting were to a painter: words were his colours, and, if properly employed, they could not fail to place the scene which he wished to conjure up as effectually before the mind's eye as the tablet or canvas presents it to the bodily organ. The same rules,' he contended, 'applied to both, and an exuberance of dialogue, in the former case, was a verbose and laborious mode of composition which went to confound the proper art of fictitious narrative with that of the drama, a widely different species of composition, of which dialogue was the very essence, because all, excepting the language to be made use of, was presented to the eye by the dresses, and persons, and actions of the performers upon the stage. But as nothing,' said Dick, 'can be more dull than a long narrative written upon the plan of a drama, so where you have approached most near to that species of composition, by indulging in prolonged scenes of mere conversation, the course of your story has become chill and constrained, and you have lost the power of arresting the attention and exciting the imagination, in which upon other occasions you may be considered as having succeeded tolerably well.'



I made my bow in requital of the compliment, which was probably thrown in by way of *placebo*, and expressed myself willing at least to make one trial of a more straightforward style of composition, in which my actors should do more, and say less, than in my former attempts of this kind. Dick gave me a patronising and approving nod, and observed that, finding me so docile, he would communicate, for the benefit of my muse, a subject which he had studied with a view to his own art.

'The story,' he said, 'was, by tradition, affirmed to be truth, although, as upwards of a hundred years had passed away since the events took place, some doubt upon the accuracy of all the particulars might be reasonably entertained.'

When Dick Tinto had thus spoken, he rummaged his portfolio for the sketch from which he proposed one day to execute a picture of fourteen feet by eight. The sketch, which was cleverly executed, to use the appropriate phrase, represented an ancient hall, fitted up and furnished in what we now call the taste of Queen Elizabeth's age. The light, admitted from the upper part of a high casement, fell upon a female figure of exquisite beauty, who, in an attitude of speechless terror, appeared to watch the issue of a debate betwixt two other persons. The one was a young man, in the Vandyke dress common to the time of Charles I., who, with an air of indignant pride, testified by the manner in which he raised his head and extended his arm, seemed to be urging a claim of right, rather than of favour, to a lady whose age, and some resemblance in their features, pointed her out as the mother of the younger female, and who appeared to listen with a mixture of displeasure and impatience.

Tinto produced his sketch with an air of mysterious triumph, and gazed on it as a fond parent looks upon a hopeful child, while he anticipates the future figure he is to make in the world, and the height to which he will raise the honour of his family. He held it at arm's length from me — he held it closer — he placed it upon the top of a chest of drawers — closed the lower shutters of the casement, to adjust a downward and favourable light — fell back to the due distance, dragging me after him — shaded his face with his hand, as if to exclude all but the favourite object — and ended by spoiling a child's copy-book, which he rolled up so as to serve for the darkened tube of an amateur. I fancy my expressions of enthusiasm had not been in proportion to his own, for he presently exclaimed with

vehemence, 'Mr. Pattieson, I used to think you had an eye in your head.'

I vindicated my claim to the usual allowance of visual organs.

'Yet, on my honour,' said Dick, 'I would swear you had been born blind, since you have failed at the first glance to discover the subject and meaning of that sketch. I do not mean to praise my own performance, I leave these arts to others; I am sensible of my deficiencies, conscious that my drawing and colouring may be improved by the time I intend to dedicate to the art. But the conception — the expression — the positions — these tell the story to every one who looks at the sketch; and if I can finish the picture without diminution of the original conception, the name of Tinto shall no more be smothered by the mists of envy and intrigue.'

I replied, 'That I admired the sketch exceedingly; but that to understand its full merit, I felt it absolutely necessary to be informed of the subject.'

'That is the very thing I complain of,' answered Tinto; 'you have accustomed yourself so much to these creeping twilight details of yours, that you are become incapable of receiving that instant and vivid flash of conviction which darts on the mind from seeing the happy and expressive combinations of a single scene, and which gathers from the position, attitude, and countenance of the moment, not only the history of the past lives of the personages represented, and the nature of the business on which they are immediately engaged, but lifts even the veil of futurity, and affords a shrewd guess at their future fortunes.'

'In that case,' replied I, 'Painting excels the ape of the renowned Gines de Passamonte, which only meddled with the past and the present; nay, she excels that very Nature who affords her subjects; for I protest to you, Dick, that were I permitted to peep into that Elizabeth-chamber, and see the persons you have sketched conversing in flesh and blood, I should not be a jot nearer guessing the nature of their business than I am at this moment while looking at your sketch. Only generally, from the languishing look of the young lady, and the care you have taken to present a very handsome leg on the part of the gentleman, I presume there is some reference to a love affair between them.'

'Do you really presume to form such a bold conjecture?' said Tinto. 'And the indignant earnestness with which you see the man urge his suit, the unresisting and passive despair

of the younger female, the stern air of inflexible determination in the elder woman, whose looks express at once consciousness that she is acting wrong and a firm determination to persist in the course she has adopted ——'

'If her looks express all this, my dear Tinto,' replied I, interrupting him, 'your pencil rivals the dramatic art of Mr. Puff in *The Critic*, who crammed a whole complicated sentence into the expressive shake of Lord Burleigh's head.'

'My good friend, Peter,' replied Tinto, 'I observe you are perfectly incorrigible; however, I have compassion on your dulness, and am unwilling you should be deprived of the pleasure of understanding my picture, and of gaining, at the same time, a subject for your own pen. You must know then, last summer, while I was taking sketches on the coast of East Lothian and Berwickshire, I was seduced into the mountains of Lammermoor by the account I received of some remains of antiquity in that district. Those with which I was most struck were the ruins of an ancient castle in which that Elizabeth-chamber, as you call it, once existed. I resided for two or three days at a farmhouse in the neighbourhood, where the aged goodwife was well acquainted with the history of the castle, and the events which had taken place in it. One of these was of a nature so interesting and singular, that my attention was divided between my wish to draw the old ruins in landscape, and to represent, in a history-piece, the singular events which have taken place in it. Here are my notes of the tale,' said poor Dick, handing a parcel of loose scraps, partly scratched over with his pencil, partly with his pen, where outlines of caricatures, sketches of turrets, mills, old gables, and dovecots, disputed the ground with his written memoranda.

I proceeded, however, to decipher the substance of the manuscript as well as I could, and wove it into the following Tale, in which, following in part, though not entirely, my friend Tinto's advice, I endeavoured to render my narrative rather descriptive than dramatic. My favourite propensity, however, has at times overcome me, and my persons, like many others in this talking world, speak now and then a great deal more than they act.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [See Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. vi. pp. 66, etc.]

## CHAPTER II

Well, lords, we have not got that which we have ;  
'T is not enough our foes are this time fled,  
Being opposites of such repairing nature.

*Henry VI. Part II.*

**I**N the gorge of a pass or mountain glen, ascending from the fertile plains of East Lothian, there stood in former times an extensive castle, of which only the ruins are now visible. Its ancient proprietors were a race of powerful and warlike barons, who bore the same name with the castle itself, which was Ravenswood. Their line extended to a remote period of antiquity, and they had intermarried with the Douglasses, Humes, Swintons, Hays, and other families of power and distinction in the same country. Their history was frequently involved in that of Scotland itself, in whose annals their feats are recorded. The Castle of Ravenswood, occupying, and in some measure commanding, a pass betwixt Berwickshire, or the Merse, as the southeastern province of Scotland is termed, and the Lothians, was of importance both in times of foreign war and domestic discord. It was frequently besieged with ardour, and defended with obstinacy, and, of course, its owners played a conspicuous part in story. But their house had its revolutions, like all sublunary things : it became greatly declined from its splendour about the middle of the 17th century ; and towards the period of the Revolution, the last proprietor of Ravenswood Castle saw himself compelled to part with the ancient family seat, and to remove himself to a lonely and sea-beaten tower, which, situated on the bleak shores between St. Abb's Head and the village of Eyemouth, looked out on the lonely and boisterous German Ocean. A black domain of wild pastureland surrounded their new residence, and formed the remains of their property.

Lord Ravenswood, the heir of this ruined family, was far from bending his mind to his new condition of life. In the

civil war of 1689 he had espoused the sinking side, and although he had escaped without the forfeiture of life or land, his blood had been attainted, and his title abolished. He was now called Lord Ravenswood only in courtesy.

This forfeited nobleman inherited the pride and turbulence, though not the fortune, of his house, and, as he imputed the final declension of his family to a particular individual, he honoured that person with his full portion of hatred. This was the very man who had now become, by purchase, proprietor of Ravenswood, and the domains of which the heir of the house now stood dispossessed. He was descended of a family much less ancient than that of Lord Ravenswood, and which had only risen to wealth and political importance during the great civil wars. He himself had been bred to the bar, and had held high offices in the state, maintaining through life the character of a skilful fisher in the troubled waters of a state divided by factions, and governed by delegated authority; and of one who contrived to amass considerable sums of money in a country where there was but little to be gathered, and who equally knew the value of wealth and the various means of augmenting it and using it as an engine of increasing his power and influence.

Thus qualified and gifted, he was a dangerous antagonist to the fierce and imprudent Ravenswood. Whether he had given him good cause for the enmity with which the Baron regarded him, was a point on which men spoke differently. Some said the quarrel arose merely from the vindictive spirit and envy of Lord Ravenswood, who could not patiently behold another, though by just and fair purchase, become the proprietor of the estate and castle of his forefathers. But the greater part of the public, prone to slander the wealthy in their absence as to flatter them in their presence, held a less charitable opinion. They said that the Lord Keeper (for to this height Sir William Ashton had ascended) had, previous to the final purchase of the estate of Ravenswood, been concerned in extensive pecuniary transactions with the former proprietor; and, rather intimating what was probable than affirming anything positively, they asked which party was likely to have the advantage in stating and enforcing the claims arising out of these complicated affairs, and more than hinted the advantages which the cool lawyer and able politician must necessarily possess over the hot, fiery, and imprudent character whom he had involved in legal toils and pecuniary snares.



The character of the times aggravated these suspicions. 'In those days there was no king in Israel.' Since the departure of James VI. to assume the richer and more powerful crown of England, there had existed in Scotland contending parties, formed among the aristocracy, by whom, as their intrigues at the court of St. James's chanced to prevail, the delegated powers of sovereignty were alternately swayed. The evils attending upon this system of government resemble those which afflict the tenants of an Irish estate, the property of an absentee. There was no supreme power, claiming and possessing a general interest with the community at large, to whom the oppressed might appeal from subordinate tyranny, either for justice or for mercy. Let a monarch be as indolent, as selfish, as much disposed to arbitrary power as he will, still, in a free country, his own interests are so clearly connected with those of the public at large, and the evil consequences to his own authority are so obvious and imminent when a different course is pursued, that common policy, as well as common feeling, point to the equal distribution of justice, and to the establishment of the throne in righteousness. Thus, even sovereigns remarkable for usurpation and tyranny have been found rigorous in the administration of justice among their subjects, in cases where their own power and passions were not compromised.

It is very different when the powers of sovereignty are delegated to the head of an aristocratic faction, rivalled and pressed closely in the race of ambition by an adverse leader. His brief and precarious enjoyment of power must be employed in rewarding his partizans, in extending his influence, in oppressing and crushing his adversaries. Even Abou Hassan, the most disinterested of all viceroys, forgot not, during his caliphate of one day, to send a *douceur* of one thousand pieces of gold to his own household; and the Scottish vicegerents, raised to power by the strength of their faction, failed not to embrace the same means of rewarding them.

The administration of justice, in particular, was infected by the most gross partiality. A case of importance scarcely occurred in which there was not some ground for bias or partiality on the part of the judges, who were so little able to withstand the temptation that the adage, 'Show me the man, and I will show you the law,' became as prevalent as it was scandalous. One corruption led the way to others still more gross and profligate. The judge who lent his sacred authority

in one case to support a friend, and in another to crush an enemy, and whose decisions were founded on family connexions or political relations, could not be supposed inaccessible to direct personal motives; and the purse of the wealthy was too often believed to be thrown into the scale to weigh down the cause of the poor litigant. The subordinate officers of the law affected little scruple concerning bribery. Pieces of plate and bags of money were sent in presents to the king's counsel, to influence their conduct, and poured forth, says a contemporary writer, like billets of wood upon their floors, without even the decency of concealment.

In such times, it was not over uncharitable to suppose that the statesman, practised in courts of law, and a powerful member of a triumphant cabal, might find and use means of advantage over his less skilful and less favoured adversary; and if it had been supposed that Sir William Ashton's conscience had been too delicate to profit by these advantages, it was believed that his ambition and desire of extending his wealth and consequence found as strong a stimulus in the exhortations of his lady as the daring aim of Macbeth in the days of yore.

Lady Ashton was of a family more distinguished than that of her lord, an advantage which she did not fail to use to the uttermost, in maintaining and extending her husband's influence over others, and, unless she was greatly belied, her own over him. She had been beautiful, and was stately and majestic in her appearance. Endowed by nature with strong powers and violent passions, experience had taught her to employ the one, and to conceal, if not to moderate, the other. She was a severe and strict observer of the external forms, at least, of devotion; her hospitality was splendid, even to ostentation; her address and manners, agreeable to the pattern most valued in Scotland at the period, were grave, dignified, and severely regulated by the rules of etiquette. Her character had always been beyond the breath of slander. And yet, with all these qualities to excite respect, Lady Ashton was seldom mentioned in the terms of love or affection. Interest—the interest of her family, if not her own—seemed too obviously the motive of her actions; and where this is the case, the sharp-judging and malignant public are not easily imposed upon by outward show. It was seen and ascertained that, in her most graceful courtesies and compliments, Lady Ashton no more lost sight of her object than the falcon in his airy wheel turns his quick eyes from his destined quarry; and hence, something of doubt and suspicion

qualified the feelings with which her equals received her attentions. With her inferiors these feelings were mingled with fear; an impression useful to her purposes, so far as it enforced ready compliance with her requests and implicit obedience to her commands, but detrimental, because it cannot exist with affection or regard.

Even her husband, it is said, upon whose fortunes her talents and address had produced such emphatic influence, regarded her with respectful awe rather than confiding attachment; and report said, there were times when he considered his grandeur as dearly purchased at the expense of domestic thralldom. Of this, however, much might be suspected, but little could be accurately known: Lady Ashton regarded the honour of her husband as her own, and was well aware how much that would suffer in the public eye should he appear a vassal to his wife. In all her arguments his opinion was quoted as infallible; his taste was appealed to, and his sentiments received, with the air of deference which a dutiful wife might seem to owe to a husband of Sir William Ashton's rank and character. But there was something under all this which rung false and hollow; and to those who watched this couple with close, and perhaps malicious, scrutiny it seemed evident that, in the haughtiness of a firmer character, higher birth, and more decided views of aggrandisement, the lady looked with some contempt on her husband, and that he regarded her with jealous fear, rather than with love or admiration.

Still, however, the leading and favourite interests of Sir William Ashton and his lady were the same, and they failed not to work in concert, although without cordiality, and to testify, in all exterior circumstances, that respect for each other which they were aware was necessary to secure that of the public.

Their union was crowned with several children, of whom three survived. One, the eldest son, was absent on his travels; the second, a girl of seventeen, and the third, a boy about three years younger, resided with their parents in Edinburgh during the sessions of the Scottish Parliament and Privy Council, at other times in the old Gothic castle of Ravenswood, to which the Lord Keeper had made large additions in the style of the 17th century.

Allan Lord Ravenswood, the late proprietor of that ancient mansion and the large estate annexed to it, continued for some time to wage ineffectual war with his successor concerning

various points to which their former transactions had given rise, and which were successively determined in favour of the wealthy and powerful competitor, until death closed the litigation, by summoning Ravenswood to a higher bar. The thread of life, which had been long wasting, gave way during a fit of violent and impotent fury with which he was assailed on receiving the news of the loss of a cause, founded, perhaps, rather in equity than in law, the last which he had maintained against his powerful antagonist. His son witnessed his dying agonies, and heard the curses which he breathed against his adversary, as if they had conveyed to him a legacy of vengeance. Other circumstances happened to exasperate a passion which was, and had long been, a prevalent vice in the Scottish disposition.

It was a November morning, and the cliffs which overlooked the ocean were hung with thick and heavy mist, when the portals of the ancient and half-ruinous tower, in which Lord Ravenswood had spent the last and troubled years of his life, opened, that his mortal remains might pass forward to an abode yet more dreary and lonely. The pomp of attendance, to which the deceased had, in his latter years, been a stranger, was revived as he was about to be consigned to the realms of forgetfulness.

Banner after banner, with the various devices and coats of this ancient family and its connexions, followed each other in mournful procession from under the low-browed archway of the courtyard. The principal gentry of the country attended in the deepest mourning, and tempered the pace of their long train of horses to the solemn march befitting the occasion. Trumpets, with banners of crape attached to them, sent forth their long and melancholy notes to regulate the movements of the procession. An immense train of inferior mourners and menials closed the rear, which had not yet issued from the castle gate when the van had reached the chapel where the body was to be deposited.

Contrary to the custom, and even to the law, of the time, the body was met by a priest of the Scottish Episcopal communion, arrayed in his surplice, and prepared to read over the coffin of the deceased the funeral service of the church. Such had been the desire of Lord Ravenswood in his last illness, and it was readily complied with by the Tory gentlemen, or Cavaliers, as they affected to style themselves, in which faction most of his kinsmen were enrolled. The Presbyterian Church judicatory of the bounds, considering the ceremony as a bravading insult

upon their authority, had applied to the Lord Keeper, as the nearest privy councillor, for a warrant to prevent its being carried into effect; so that, when the clergyman had opened his prayer-book, an officer of the law, supported by some armed men, commanded him to be silent. An insult which fired the whole assembly with indignation was particularly and instantly resented by the only son of the deceased, Edgar, popularly called the Master of Ravenswood, a youth of about twenty years of age. He clapped his hand on his sword, and, bidding the official person to desist at his peril from farther interruption, commanded the clergyman to proceed. The man attempted to enforce his commission; but as an hundred swords at once glittered in the air, he contented himself with protesting against the violence which had been offered to him in the execution of his duty, and stood aloof, a sullen and moody spectator of the ceremonial, muttering as one who should say, 'You'll rue the day that clogs me with this answer.'

The scene was worthy of an artist's pencil. Under the very arch of the house of death, the clergyman, affrighted at the scene, and trembling for his own safety, hastily and unwillingly rehearsed the solemn service of the church, and spoke 'dust to dust and ashes to ashes,' over ruined pride and decayed prosperity. Around stood the relations of the deceased, their countenances more in anger than in sorrow, and the drawn swords which they brandished forming a violent contrast with their deep mourning habits. In the countenance of the young man alone, resentment seemed for the moment overpowered by the deep agony with which he beheld his nearest, and almost his only, friend consigned to the tomb of his ancestry. A relative observed him turn deadly pale, when, all rites being now duly observed, it became the duty of the chief mourner to lower down into the charnel vault, where mouldering coffins showed their tattered velvet and decayed plating, the head of the corpse which was to be their partner in corruption. He stepped to the youth and offered his assistance, which, by a mute motion, Edgar Ravenswood rejected. Firmly, and without a tear, he performed that last duty. The stone was laid on the sepulchre, the door of the aisle was locked, and the youth took possession of its massive key.

As the crowd left the chapel, he paused on the steps which led to its Gothic chancel. 'Gentlemen and friends,' he said, 'you have this day done no common duty to the body of your deceased kinsman. The rites of due observance, which, in other



countries, are allowed as the due of the meanest Christian, would this day have been denied to the body of your relative — not certainly sprung of the meanest house in Scotland — had it not been assured to him by your courage. Others bury their dead in sorrow and tears, in silence and in reverence ; our funeral rites are marred by the intrusion of bailiffs and ruffians, and our grief — the grief due to our departed friend — is chased from our cheeks by the glow of just indignation. But it is well that I know from what quiver this arrow has come forth. It was only he that dug the grave who could have the mean cruelty to disturb the obsequies ; and Heaven do as much to me and more, if I requite not to this man and his house the ruin and disgrace he has brought on me and mine !’

A numerous part of the assembly applauded this speech, as the spirited expression of just resentment ; but the more cool and judicious regretted that it had been uttered. The fortunes of the heir of Ravenswood were too low to brave the farther hostility which they imagined these open expressions of resentment must necessarily provoke. Their apprehensions, however, proved groundless, at least in the immediate consequences of this affair.

The mourners returned to the tower, there, according to a custom but recently abolished in Scotland, to carouse deep healths to the memory of the deceased, to make the house of sorrow ring with sounds of joviality and debauch, and to diminish, by the expense of a large and profuse entertainment, the limited revenues of the heir of him whose funeral they thus strangely honoured. It was the custom, however, and on the present occasion it was fully observed. The tables swam in wine, the populace feasted in the courtyard, the yeomen in the kitchen and buttery ; and two years’ rent of Ravenswood’s remaining property hardly defrayed the charge of the funeral revel. The wine did its office on all but the Master of Ravenswood, a title which he still retained, though forfeiture had attached to that of his father. He, while passing around the cup which he himself did not taste, soon listened to a thousand exclamations against the Lord Keeper, and passionate protestations of attachment to himself, and to the honour of his house. He listened with dark and sullen brow to ebullitions which he considered justly as equally evanescent with the crimson bubbles on the brink of the goblet, or at least with the vapours which its contents excited in the brains of the revellers around him.

When the last flask was emptied, they took their leave with

deep protestations — to be forgotten on the morrow, if, indeed, those who made them should not think it necessary for their safety to make a more solemn retractation.

Accepting their adieus with an air of contempt which he could scarce conceal, Ravenswood at length beheld his ruinous habitation cleared of this confluence of riotous guests, and returned to the deserted hall, which now appeared doubly lonely from the cessation of that clamour to which it had so lately echoed. But its space was peopled by phantoms which the imagination of the young heir conjured up before him — the tarnished honour and degraded fortunes of his house, the destruction of his own hopes, and the triumph of that family by whom they had been ruined. To a mind naturally of a gloomy cast here was ample room for meditation, and the musings of young Ravenswood were deep and unwitnessed.

The peasant who shows the ruins of the tower, which still crown the beetling cliff and behold the war of the waves, though no more tenanted save by the sea-mew and cormorant, even yet affirms that on this fatal night the Master of Ravenswood, by the bitter exclamations of his despair, evoked some evil fiend, under whose malignant influence the future tissue of incidents was woven. Alas ! what fiend can suggest more desperate counsels than those adopted under the guidance of our own violent and unresisted passions ?

## CHAPTER III

Over Gods forebode, then said the King,  
That thou shouldst shoot at me.

*William Bell, Clim o' the Cleugh, etc.*

ON the morning after the funeral, the legal officer whose authority had been found insufficient to effect an interruption of the funeral solemnities of the late Lord Ravenswood, hastened to state before the Keeper the resistance which he had met with in the execution of his office.

The statesman was seated in a spacious library, once a banqueting-room in the old Castle of Ravenswood, as was evident from the armorial insignia still displayed on the carved roof, which was vaulted with Spanish chestnut, and on the stained glass of the casement, through which gleamed a dim yet rich light on the long rows of shelves, bending under the weight of legal commentators and monkish historians, whose ponderous volumes formed the chief and most valued contents of a Scottish historian of the period. On the massive oaken table and reading-desk lay a confused mass of letters, petitions, and parchments; to toil amongst which was the pleasure at once and the plague of Sir William Ashton's life. His appearance was grave and even noble, well becoming one who held a high office in the state; and it was not save after long and intimate conversation with him upon topics of pressing and personal interest, that a stranger could have discovered something vacillating and uncertain in his resolutions; an infirmity of purpose, arising from a cautious and timid disposition, which, as he was conscious of its internal influence on his mind, he was, from pride as well as policy, most anxious to conceal from others.

He listened with great apparent composure to an exaggerated account of the tumult which had taken place at the funeral, of the contempt thrown on his own authority and

that of the church and state ; nor did he seem moved even by the faithful report of the insulting and threatening language which had been uttered by young Ravenswood and others, and obviously directed against himself. He heard, also, what the man had been able to collect, in a very distorted and aggravated shape, of the toasts which had been drunk, and the menaces uttered, at the subsequent entertainment. In fine, he made careful notes of all these particulars, and of the names of the persons by whom, in case of need, an accusation, founded upon these violent proceedings, could be witnessed and made good, and dismissed his informer, secure that he was now master of the remaining fortune, and even of the personal liberty, of young Ravenswood.

When the door had closed upon the officer of the law, the Lord Keeper remained for a moment in deep meditation ; then, starting from his seat, paced the apartment as one about to take a sudden and energetic resolution. ‘Young Ravenswood,’ he muttered, ‘is now mine—he is my own ; he has placed himself in my hand, and he shall bend or break. I have not forgot the determined and dogged obstinacy with which his father fought every point to the last, resisted every effort at compromise, embroiled me in lawsuits, and attempted to assail my character when he could not otherwise impugn my rights. This boy he has left behind him — this Edgar — this hot-headed, hare-brained fool, has wrecked his vessel before she has cleared the harbour. I must see that he gains no advantage of some turning tide which may again float him off. These memoranda, properly stated to the privy council, cannot but be construed into an aggravated riot, in which the dignity both of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities stands committed. A heavy fine might be imposed ; an order for committing him to Edinburgh or Blackness Castle seems not improper ; even a charge of treason might be laid on many of these words and expressions, though God forbid I should prosecute the matter to that extent. No, I will not ; I will not touch his life, even if it should be in my power ; and yet, if he lives till a change of times, what follows ? Restitution — perhaps revenge. I know Athole promised his interest to old Ravenswood, and here is his son already bandying and making a faction by his own contemptible influence. What a ready tool he would be for the use of those who are watching the downfall of our administration !’

While these thoughts were agitating the mind of the wily statesman, and while he was persuading himself that his own

interest and safety, as well as those of his friends and party, depended on using the present advantage to the uttermost against young Ravenswood, the Lord Keeper sat down to his desk, and proceeded to draw up, for the information of the privy council, an account of the disorderly proceedings which, in contempt of his warrant, had taken place at the funeral of Lord Ravenswood. The names of most of the parties concerned, as well as the fact itself, would, he was well aware, sound odiously in the ears of his colleagues in administration, and most likely instigate them to make an example of young Ravenswood, at least, *in terrorem*.

It was a point of delicacy, however, to select such expressions as might infer the young man's culpability, without seeming directly to urge it, which, on the part of Sir William Ashton, his father's ancient antagonist, could not but appear odious and invidious. While he was in the act of composition, labouring to find words which might indicate Edgar Ravenswood to be the cause of the uproar, without specifically making such a charge, Sir William, in a pause of his task, chanced, in looking upward, to see the crest of the family for whose heir he was whetting the arrows and disposing the toils of the law carved upon one of the corbeilles from which the vaulted roof of the apartment sprung. It was a black bull's head, with the legend, 'I bide my time'; and the occasion upon which it was adopted mingled itself singularly and impressively with the subject of his present reflections.

It was said by a constant tradition that a Malisius de Ravenswood had, in the 13th century, been deprived of his castles and lands by a powerful usurper, who had for a while enjoyed his spoils in quiet. At length, on the eve of a costly banquet, Ravenswood, who had watched his opportunity, introduced himself into the castle with a small band of faithful retainers. The serving of the expected feast was impatiently looked for by the guests, and clamorously demanded by the temporary master of the castle. Ravenswood, who had assumed the disguise of a sewer upon the occasion, answered, in a stern voice, 'I bide my time'; and at the same moment a bull's head, the ancient symbol of death, was placed upon the table. The explosion of the conspiracy took place upon the signal, and the usurper and his followers were put to death. Perhaps there was something in this still known and often repeated story which came immediately home to the breast and conscience of the Lord Keeper; for, putting from him the paper on which he had begun his report,



and carefully locking the memoranda which he had prepared into a cabinet which stood beside him, he proceeded to walk abroad, as if for the purpose of collecting his ideas, and reflecting farther on the consequences of the step which he was about to take, ere yet they became inevitable.

In passing through a large Gothic ante-room, Sir William Ashton heard the sound of his daughter's lute. Music, when the performers are concealed, affects us with a pleasure mingled with surprise, and reminds us of the natural concert of birds among the leafy bowers. The statesman, though little accustomed to give way to emotions of this natural and simple class, was still a man and a father. He stopped, therefore, and listened, while the silver tones of Lucy Ashton's voice mingled with the accompaniment in an ancient air, to which some one had adapted the following words :—

‘Look not thou on beauty’s charming,  
Sit thou still when kings are arming,  
Taste not when the wine-cup glistens,  
Speak not when the people listens,  
Stop thine ear against the singer,  
From the red gold keep thy finger,  
Vacant heart, and hand, and eye,  
Easy live and quiet die.’

The sounds ceased, and the Keeper entered his daughter's apartment.

The words she had chosen seemed particularly adapted to her character ; for Lucy Ashton's exquisitely beautiful, yet somewhat girlish features were formed to express peace of mind, serenity, and indifference to the tinsel of worldly pleasure. Her locks, which were of shadowy gold, divided on a brow of exquisite whiteness, like a gleam of broken and pallid sunshine upon a hill of snow. The expression of the countenance was in the last degree gentle, soft, timid, and feminine, and seemed rather to shrink from the most casual look of a stranger than to court his admiration. Something there was of a Madonna cast, perhaps the result of delicate health, and of residence in a family where the dispositions of the inmates were fiercer, more active, and energetic than her own.

Yet her passiveness of disposition was by no means owing to an indifferent or unfeeling mind. Left to the impulse of her own taste and feelings, Lucy Ashton was peculiarly accessible to those of a romantic cast. Her secret delight was in the old legendary tales of ardent devotion and unalterable affection,

chequered as they so often are with strange adventures and supernatural horrors. This was her favoured fairy realm, and here she erected her aerial palaces. But it was only in secret that she laboured at this delusive though delightful architecture. In her retired chamber, or in the woodland bower which she had chosen for her own, and called after her name, she was in fancy distributing the prizes at the tournament, or raining down influence from her eyes on the valiant combatants; or she was wandering in the wilderness with Una, under escort of the generous lion; or she was identifying herself with the simple yet noble-minded Miranda in the isle of wonder and enchantment.

But in her exterior relations to things of this world, Lucy willingly received the ruling impulse from those around her. The alternative was, in general, too indifferent to her to render resistance desirable, and she willingly found a motive for decision in the opinion of her friends which perhaps she might have sought for in vain in her own choice. Every reader must have observed in some family of his acquaintance some individual of a temper soft and yielding, who, mixed with stronger and more ardent minds, is borne along by the will of others, with as little power of opposition as the flower which is flung into a running stream. It usually happens that such a compliant and easy disposition, which resigns itself without murmur to the guidance of others, becomes the darling of those to whose inclinations its own seem to be offered, in ungrudging and ready sacrifice.

This was eminently the case with Lucy Ashton. Her politic, wary, and worldly father felt for her an affection the strength of which sometimes surprised him into an unusual emotion. Her elder brother, who trode the path of ambition with a haughtier step than his father, had also more of human affection. A soldier, and in a dissolute age, he preferred his sister Lucy even to pleasure and to military preferment and distinction. Her younger brother, at an age when trifles chiefly occupied his mind, made her the confidante of all his pleasures and anxieties, his success in field-sports, and his quarrels with his tutor and instructors. To these details, however trivial, Lucy lent patient and not indifferent attention. They moved and interested Henry, and that was enough to secure her ear.

Her mother alone did not feel that distinguished and predominating affection with which the rest of the family cherished

Lucy. She regarded what she termed her daughter's want of spirit as a decided mark that the more plebeian blood of her father predominated in Lucy's veins, and used to call her in derision her Lammermoor Shepherdess. To dislike so gentle and inoffensive a being was impossible; but Lady Ashton preferred her eldest son, on whom had descended a large portion of her own ambitious and undaunted disposition, to a daughter whose softness of temper seemed allied to feebleness of mind. Her eldest son was the more partially beloved by his mother because, contrary to the usual custom of Scottish families of distinction, he had been named after the head of the house.

'My Sholto,' she said, 'will support the untarnished honour of his maternal house, and elevate and support that of his father. Poor Lucy is unfit for courts or crowded halls. Some country laird must be her husband, rich enough to supply her with every comfort, without an effort on her own part, so that she may have nothing to shed a tear for but the tender apprehension lest he may break his neck in a fox-chase. It was not so, however, that our house was raised, nor is it so that it can be fortified and augmented. The Lord Keeper's dignity is yet new; it must be borne as if we were used to its weight, worthy of it, and prompt to assert and maintain it. Before ancient authorities men bend from customary and hereditary deference; in our presence they will stand erect, unless they are compelled to prostrate themselves. A daughter fit for the sheepfold or the cloister is ill qualified to exact respect where it is yielded with reluctance; and since Heaven refused us a third boy, Lucy should have held a character fit to supply his place. The hour will be a happy one which disposes her hand in marriage to some one whose energy is greater than her own, or whose ambition is of as low an order.'

So meditated a mother to whom the qualities of her children's hearts, as well as the prospect of their domestic happiness, seemed light in comparison to their rank and temporal greatness. But, like many a parent of hot and impatient character, she was mistaken in estimating the feelings of her daughter, who, under a semblance of extreme indifference, nourished the germ of those passions which sometimes spring up in one night, like the gourd of the prophet, and astonish the observer by their unexpected ardour and intensity. In fact, Lucy's sentiments seemed chill because nothing had occurred to interest or awaken them. Her life had hitherto flowed on in a uniform and gentle tenor, and happy

for her had not its present smoothness of current resembled that of the stream as it glides downwards to the waterfall !

‘So, Lucy,’ said her father, entering as her song was ended, ‘does your musical philosopher teach you to condemn the world before you know it? That is surely something premature. Or did you but speak according to the fashion of fair maidens, who are always to hold the pleasures of life in contempt till they are pressed upon them by the address of some gentle knight?’

Lucy blushed, disclaimed any inference respecting her own choice being drawn from her selection of a song, and readily laid aside her instrument at her father’s request that she would attend him in his walk.

A large and well-wooded park, or rather chase, stretched along the hill behind the castle, which, occupying, as we have noticed, a pass ascending from the plain, seemed built in its very gorge to defend the forest ground which arose behind it in shaggy majesty. Into this romantic region the father and daughter proceeded, arm in arm, by a noble avenue overarched by embowering elms, beneath which groups of the fallow-deer were seen to stray in distant perspective. As they paced slowly on, admiring the different points of view, for which Sir William Ashton, notwithstanding the nature of his usual avocations, had considerable taste and feeling, they were overtaken by the forester, or park-keeper, who, intent on silvan sport, was proceeding with his cross-bow over his arm, and a hound led in leash by his boy, into the interior of the wood.

‘Going to shoot us a piece of venison, Norman?’ said his master, as he returned the woodman’s salutation.

‘Saul, your honour, and that I am. Will it please you to see the sport?’

‘O no,’ said his lordship, after looking at his daughter, whose colour fled at the idea of seeing the deer shot, although, had her father expressed his wish that they should accompany Norman, it was probable she would not even have hinted her reluctance.

The forester shrugged his shoulders. ‘It was a disheartening thing,’ he said, ‘when none of the gentles came down to see the sport. He hoped Captain Sholto would be soon hame, or he might shut up his shop entirely; for Mr. Harry was kept sae close wi’ his Latin nonsense that, though his will was very gude to be in the wood from morning till night, there would be a hopeful lad lost, and no making a man of him. It was not so,

he had heard, in Lord Ravenswood's time : when a buck was to be killed, man and mother's son ran to see ; and when the deer fell, the knife was always presented to the knight, and he never gave less than a dollar for the compliment. And there was Edgar Ravenswood — Master of Ravenswood that is now — when he goes up to the wood — there hasna been a better hunter since Tristrem's time — when Sir Edgar hauds out,<sup>1</sup> down goes the deer, faith. But we hae lost a' sense of woodcraft on this side of the hill.'

There was much in this harangue highly displeasing to the Lord Keeper's feelings ; he could not help observing that his menial despised him almost avowedly for not possessing that taste for sport which in those times was deemed the natural and indispensable attribute of a real gentleman. But the master of the game is, in all country houses, a man of great importance, and entitled to use considerable freedom of speech. Sir William, therefore, only smiled and replied, 'He had something else to think upon to-day than killing deer' ; meantime, taking out his purse, he gave the ranger a dollar for his encouragement. The fellow received it as the waiter of a fashionable hotel receives double his proper fee from the hands of a country gentleman — that is, with a smile, in which pleasure at the gift is mingled with contempt for the ignorance of the donor. 'Your honour is the bad paymaster,' he said, 'who pays before it is done. What would you do were I to miss the buck after you have paid me my wood-fee ?'

'I suppose,' said the Keeper, smiling, 'you would hardly guess what I mean were I to tell you of a *condictio indebiti* ?'

'Not I, on my saul. I guess it is some law phrase ; but sue a beggar, and — your honour knows what follows. Well, but I will be just with you, and if bow and brach fail not, you shall have a piece of game two fingers fat on the brisket.'

As he was about to go off, his master again called him, and asked, as if by accident, whether the Master of Ravenswood was actually so brave a man and so good a shooter as the world spoke him.

'Brave ! — brave enough, I warrant you,' answered Norman. 'I was in the wood at Tynninghame when there was a sort of gallants hunting with my lord ; on my saul, there was a buck turned to bay made us all stand back — a stout old Trojan of the first head, ten-tynd branches, and a brow as broad as e'er a bullock's. Egad, he dashed at the old lord, and there would

<sup>1</sup> *Hauds out.* Holds out, *i. e.*, presents his piece.



have been inlake among the peerage, if the Master had not whipt roundly in, and hamstrung him with his cutlass. He was but sixteen then, bless his heart !’

‘And is he as ready with the gun as with the couteau ?’ said Sir William.

‘He ’ll strike this silver dollar out from beneath my finger and thumb at fourscore yards, and I ’ll hold it out for a gold merk ; what more would ye have of eye, hand, lead, and gunpowder ?’

‘O, no more to be wished, certainly,’ said the Lord Keeper ; ‘but we keep you from your sport, Norman. Good morrow, good Norman.’

And, humming his rustic roundelay, the yeoman went on his road, the sound of his rough voice gradually dying away as the distance betwixt them increased : —

‘The monk must arise when the matins ring,  
The abbot may sleep to their chime ;  
But the yeoman must start when the bugles sing,  
’T is time, my hearts, ’t is time.

‘There’s bucks and raes on Bilhope braes,  
There’s a herd on Shortwood Shaw ;  
But a lily-white doe in the garden goes,  
She’s fairly worth them a’.

‘Has this fellow,’ said the Lord Keeper, when the yeoman’s song had died on the wind, ‘ever served the Ravenswood people, that he seems so much interested in them ? I suppose you know, Lucy, for you make it a point of conscience to record the special history of every boor about the castle.’

‘I am not quite so faithful a chronicler, my dear father ; but I believe that Norman once served here while a boy, and before he went to Ledington, whence you hired him. But if you want to know anything of the former family, Old Alice is the best authority.’

‘And what should I have to do with them, pray, Lucy,’ said her father, ‘or with their history or accomplishments ?’

‘Nay, I do not know, sir ; only that you were asking questions of Norman about young Ravenswood.’

‘Pshaw, child !’ replied her father, yet immediately added, ‘And who is Old Alice ? I think you know all the old women in the country.’

‘To be sure I do, or how could I help the old creatures when they are in hard times ? And as to Old Alice, she is the very empress of old women and queen of gossips, so far as

legendary lore is concerned. She is blind, poor old soul, but when she speaks to you, you would think she has some way of looking into your very heart. I am sure I often cover my face, or turn it away, for it seems as if she saw one change colour, though she has been blind these twenty years. She is worth visiting, were it but to say you have seen a blind and paralytic old woman have so much acuteness of perception and dignity of manners. I assure you, she might be a countess from her language and behaviour. Come, you must go to see Alice; we are not a quarter of a mile from her cottage.

‘All this, my dear,’ said the Lord Keeper, ‘is no answer to my question, who this woman is, and what is her connexion with the former proprietor’s family?’

‘O, it was something of a nouriceship, I believe; and she remained here, because her two grandsons were engaged in your service. But it was against her will, I fancy; for the poor old creature is always regretting the change of times and of property.’

‘I am much obliged to her,’ answered the Lord Keeper. ‘She and her folk eat my bread and drink my cup, and are lamenting all the while that they are not still under a family which never could do good, either to themselves or any one else!’

‘Indeed,’ replied Lucy, ‘I am certain you do Old Alice injustice. She has nothing mercenary about her, and would not accept a penny in charity, if it were to save her from being starved. She is only talkative, like all old folk when you put them on stories of their youth; and she speaks about the Ravenswood people, because she lived under them so many years. But I am sure she is grateful to you, sir, for your protection, and that she would rather speak to you than to any other person in the whole world beside. Do, sir, come and see Old Alice.’

And with the freedom of an indulged daughter she dragged the Lord Keeper in the direction she desired.

## CHAPTER IV

Through tops of the high trees she did descry  
A little smoke, whose vapour, thin and light,  
Reeking aloft, uprolled to the sky,  
Which cheerful sign did send unto her sight,  
That in the same did wonne some living wight.

SPENSER.

LUCY acted as her father's guide, for he was too much engrossed with his political labours, or with society, to be perfectly acquainted with his own extensive domains, and, moreover, was generally an inhabitant of the city of Edinburgh; and she, on the other hand, had, with her mother, resided the whole summer in Ravenswood, and, partly from taste, partly from want of any other amusement, had, by her frequent rambles, learned to know each lane, alley, dingle, or bushy dell,

And every bosky bourne from side to side.

We have said that the Lord Keeper was not indifferent to the beauties of nature; and we add, in justice to him, that he felt them doubly when pointed out by the beautiful, simple, and interesting girl who, hanging on his arm with filial kindness, now called him to admire the size of some ancient oak, and now the unexpected turn where the path, developing its maze from glen or dingle, suddenly reached an eminence commanding an extensive view of the plains beneath them, and then gradually glided away from the prospect to lose itself among rocks and thickets, and guide to scenes of deeper seclusion.

It was when pausing on one of those points of extensive and commanding view that Lucy told her father they were close by the cottage of her blind *protégée*; and on turning from the little hill, a path which led around it, worn by the daily steps of the infirm inmate, brought them in sight of the

hut, which, embosomed in a deep and obscure dell, seemed to have been so situated purposely to bear a correspondence with the darkened state of its inhabitant.

The cottage was situated immediately under a tall rock, which in some measure beetled over it, as if threatening to drop some detached fragment from its brow on the frail tenement beneath. The hut itself was constructed of turf and stones, and rudely roofed over with thatch, much of which was in a dilapidated condition. The thin blue smoke rose from it in a light column, and curled upward along the white face of the incumbent rock, giving the scene a tint of exquisite softness. In a small and rude garden, surrounded by straggling elder-bushes, which formed a sort of imperfect hedge, sat near to the bee-hives, by the produce of which she lived, that 'woman old' whom Lucy had brought her father hither to visit.

Whatever there had been which was disastrous in her fortune, whatever there was miserable in her dwelling, it was easy to judge by the first glance that neither years, poverty, misfortune, nor infirmity had broken the spirit of this remarkable woman.

She occupied a turf seat, placed under a weeping birch of unusual magnitude and age, as Judah is represented sitting under her palm-tree, with an air at once of majesty and of dejection. Her figure was tall, commanding, and but little bent by the infirmities of old age. Her dress, though that of a peasant, was uncommonly clean, forming in that particular a strong contrast to most of her rank, and was disposed with an attention to neatness, and even to taste, equally unusual. But it was her expression of countenance which chiefly struck the spectator, and induced most persons to address her with a degree of deference and civility very inconsistent with the miserable state of her dwelling, and which, nevertheless, she received with that easy composure which showed she felt it to be her due. She had once been beautiful, but her beauty had been of a bold and masculine cast, such as does not survive the bloom of youth; yet her features continued to express strong sense, deep reflection, and a character of sober pride, which, as we have already said of her dress, appeared to argue a conscious superiority to those of her own rank. It scarce seemed possible that a face, deprived of the advantage of sight, could have expressed character so strongly; but her eyes, which were almost totally closed, did not, by the display of their sightless

orbs, mar the countenance to which they could add nothing. She seemed in a ruminating posture, soothed, perhaps, by the murmurs of the busy tribe around her to abstraction, though not to slumber.

Lucy undid the latch of the little garden gate, and solicited the old woman's attention. 'My father, Alice, is come to see you.'

'He is welcome, Miss Ashton, and so are you,' said the old woman, turning and inclining her head towards her visitors.

'This is a fine morning for your bee-hives, mother,' said the Lord Keeper, who, struck with the outward appearance of Alice, was somewhat curious to know if her conversation would correspond with it.

'I believe so, my lord,' she replied; 'I feel the air breathe milder than of late.'

'You do not,' resumed the statesman, 'take charge of these bees yourself, mother? How do you manage them?'

'By delegates, as kings do their subjects,' resumed Alice; 'and I am fortunate in a prime minister. Here, Babie.'

She whistled on a small silver call which hung around her neck, and which at that time was sometimes used to summon domestics, and Babie, a girl of fifteen, made her appearance from the hut, not altogether so cleanly arrayed as she would probably have been had Alice had the use of her eyes, but with a greater air of neatness than was upon the whole to have been expected.

'Babie,' said her mistress, 'offer some bread and honey to the Lord Keeper and Miss Ashton; they will excuse your awkwardness if you use cleanliness and despatch.'

Babie performed her mistress's command with the grace which was naturally to have been expected, moving to and fro with a lobster-like gesture, her feet and legs tending one way, while her head, turned in a different direction, was fixed in wonder upon the laird, who was more frequently heard of than seen by his tenants and dependants. The bread and honey, however, deposited on a plantain leaf, was offered and accepted in all due courtesy. The Lord Keeper, still retaining the place which he had occupied on the decayed trunk of a fallen tree, looked as if he wished to prolong the interview, but was at a loss how to introduce a suitable subject.

'You have been long a resident on this property?' he said, after a pause.

'It is now nearly sixty years since I first knew Ravenswood,' answered the old dame, whose conversation, though perfectly



civil and respectful, seemed cautiously limited to the unavoidable and necessary task of replying to Sir William.

'You are not, I should judge by your accent, of this country originally?' said the Lord Keeper, in continuation.

'No; I am by birth an Englishwoman.'

'Yet you seem attached to this country as if it were your own.'

'It is here,' replied the blind woman, 'that I have drunk the cup of joy and of sorrow which Heaven destined for me. I was here the wife of an upright and affectionate husband for more than twenty years; I was here the mother of six promising children; it was here that God deprived me of all these blessings; it was here they died, and yonder, by yon ruined chapel, they lie all buried. I had no country but theirs while they lived; I have none but theirs now they are no more.'

'But your house,' said the Lord Keeper, looking at it, 'is miserably ruinous?'

'Do, my dear father,' said Lucy, eagerly, yet bashfully, catching at the hint, 'give orders to make it better; that is, if you think it proper.'

'It will last my time, my dear Miss Lucy,' said the blind woman; 'I would not have my lord give himself the least trouble about it.'

'But,' said Lucy, 'you once had a much better house, and were rich, and now in your old age to live in this hovel!'

'It is as good as I deserve, Miss Lucy; if my heart has not broke with what I have suffered, and seen others suffer, it must have been strong enough, and the rest of this old frame has no right to call itself weaker.'

'You have probably witnessed many changes,' said the Lord Keeper; 'but your experience must have taught you to expect them.'

'It has taught me to endure them, my lord,' was the reply.

'Yet you knew that they must needs arrive in the course of years?' said the statesman.

'Ay; as I know that the stump, on or beside which you sit, once a tall and lofty tree, must needs one day fall by decay, or by the axe; yet I hoped my eyes might not witness the downfall of the tree which overshadowed my dwelling.'

'Do not suppose,' said the Lord Keeper, 'that you will lose any interest with me for looking back with regret to the days when another family possessed my estates. You had reason,

doubtless, to love them, and I respect your gratitude. I will order some repairs in your cottage, and I hope we shall live to be friends when we know each other better.'

'Those of my age,' returned the dame, 'make no new friends. I thank you for your bounty, it is well intended undoubtedly; but I have all I want, and I cannot accept more at your lordship's hands.'

'Well, then,' continued the Lord Keeper, 'at least allow me to say, that I look upon you as a woman of sense and education beyond your appearance, and that I hope you will continue to reside on this property of mine rent-free for your life.'

'I hope I shall,' said the old dame, composedly; 'I believe that was made an article in the sale of Ravenswood to your lordship, though such a trifling circumstance may have escaped your recollection.'

'I remember — I recollect,' said his lordship, somewhat confused. 'I perceive you are too much attached to your old friends to accept any benefit from their successor.'

'Far from it, my lord; I am grateful for the benefits which I decline, and I wish I could pay you for offering them, better than what I am now about to say.' The Lord Keeper looked at her in some surprise, but said not a word. 'My lord,' she continued, in an impressive and solemn tone, 'take care what you do; you are on the brink of a precipice.'

'Indeed?' said the Lord Keeper, his mind reverting to the political circumstances of the country. 'Has anything come to your knowledge — any plot or conspiracy?'

'No, my lord; those who traffic in such commodities do not call into their councils the old, blind, and infirm. My warning is of another kind. You have driven matters hard with the house of Ravenswood. Believe a true tale: they are a fierce house, and there is danger in dealing with men when they become desperate.'

'Tush,' answered the Keeper; 'what has been between us has been the work of the law, not my doing; and to the law they must look, if they would impugn my proceedings.'

'Ay, but they may think otherwise, and take the law into their own hand, when they fail of other means of redress.'

'What mean you?' said the Lord Keeper. 'Young Ravenswood would not have recourse to personal violence?'

'God forbid I should say so! I know nothing of the youth but what is honourable and open. Honourable and open, said I? I should have added, free, generous, noble. But he is still

a Ravenswood, and may bide his time. Remember the fate of Sir George Lockhart.'<sup>1</sup>

The Lord Keeper started as she called to his recollection a tragedy so deep and so recent. The old woman proceeded : 'Chiesley, who did the deed, was a relative of Lord Ravenswood. In the hall of Ravenswood, in my presence and in that of others, he avowed publicly his determination to do the cruelty which he afterwards committed. I could not keep silence, though to speak it ill became my station. "You are devising a dreadful crime," I said, "for which you must reckon before the judgment seat." Never shall I forget his look, as he replied, "I must reckon then for many things, and will reckon for this also." Therefore I may well say, beware of pressing a desperate man with the hand of authority. There is blood of Chiesley in the veins of Ravenswood, and one drop of it were enough to fire him in the circumstances in which he is placed. I say, beware of him.'

The old dame had, either intentionally or by accident, harped aright the fear of the Lord Keeper. The desperate and dark resource of private assassination, so familiar to a Scottish baron in former times, had even in the present age been too frequently resorted to under the pressure of unusual temptation, or where the mind of the actor was prepared for such a crime. Sir William Ashton was aware of this ; as also that young Ravenswood had received injuries sufficient to prompt him to that sort of revenge, which becomes a frequent though fearful consequence of the partial administration of justice. He endeavoured to disguise from Alice the nature of the apprehensions which he entertained ; but so ineffectually, that a person even of less penetration than nature had endowed her with must necessarily have been aware that the subject lay near his bosom. His voice was changed in its accent as he replied to her, 'That the Master of Ravenswood was a man of honour ; and, were it otherwise, that the fate of Chiesley of Dalry was a sufficient warning to any one who should dare to assume the office of avenger of his own imaginary wrongs.' And having hastily uttered these expressions, he rose and left the place without waiting for a reply.

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<sup>1</sup> See Note 2.

## CHAPTER V

Is she a Capulet ?  
O dear account ! my life is my foe's debt.  
SHAKESPEARE.

THE Lord Keeper walked for nearly a quarter of a mile in profound silence. His daughter, naturally timid, and bred up in those ideas of filial awe and implicit obedience which were inculcated upon the youth of that period, did not venture to interrupt his meditations.

‘Why do you look so pale, Lucy?’ said her father, turning suddenly round and breaking silence.

According to the ideas of the time, which did not permit a young woman to offer her sentiments on any subject of importance unless especially required to do so, Lucy was bound to appear ignorant of the meaning of all that had passed betwixt Alice and her father, and imputed the emotion he had observed to the fear of the wild cattle which grazed in that part of the extensive chase through which they were now walking.

Of these animals, the descendants of the savage herds which anciently roamed free in the Caledonian forests, it was formerly a point of state to preserve a few in the parks of the Scottish nobility. Specimens continued within the memory of man to be kept at least at three houses of distinction — namely, Hamilton, Drumlanrick, and Cumbernauld. They had degenerated from the ancient race in size and strength, if we are to judge from the accounts of old chronicles, and from the formidable remains frequently discovered in bogs and morasses when drained and laid open. The bull had lost the shaggy honours of his mane, and the race was small and light made, in colour a dingy white, or rather a pale yellow, with black horns and hoofs. They retained, however, in some measure, the ferocity of their ancestry, could not be domesticated on account of their antipathy to the human race, and were often dangerous if approached un-

guardedly, or wantonly disturbed. It was this last reason which has occasioned their being extirpated at the places we have mentioned, where probably they would otherwise have been retained as appropriate inhabitants of a Scottish woodland, and fit tenants for a baronial forest. A few, if I mistake not, are still preserved at Chillingham Castle, in Northumberland, the seat of the Earl of Tankerville.<sup>1</sup>

It was to her finding herself in the vicinity of a group of three or four of these animals, that Lucy thought proper to impute those signs of fear which had arisen in her countenance for a different reason. For she had been familiarised with the appearance of the wild cattle during her walks in the chase; and it was not then, as it may be now, a necessary part of a young lady's demeanour, to indulge in causeless tremors of the nerves. On the present occasion, however, she speedily found cause for real terror.

Lucy had scarcely replied to her father in the words we have mentioned, and he was just about to rebuke her supposed timidity, when a bull, stimulated either by the scarlet colour of Miss Ashton's mantle, or by one of those fits of capricious ferocity to which their dispositions are liable, detached himself suddenly from the group which was feeding at the upper extremity of a grassy glade, that seemed to lose itself among the crossing and entangled boughs. The animal approached the intruders on his pasture ground, at first slowly, pawing the ground with his hoof, bellowing from time to time, and tearing up the sand with his horns, as if to lash himself up to rage and violence.

The Lord Keeper, who observed the animal's demeanour, was aware that he was about to become mischievous, and, drawing his daughter's arm under his own, began to walk fast along the avenue, in hopes to get out of his sight and his reach. This was the most injudicious course he could have adopted, for, encouraged by the appearance of flight, the bull began to pursue them at full speed. Assailed by a danger so imminent, firmer courage than that of the Lord Keeper might have given way. But paternal tenderness, 'love strong as death,' sustained him. He continued to support and drag onward his daughter, until her fears altogether depriving her of the power of flight, she sunk down by his side; and when he could no longer assist her to escape, he turned round and placed himself betwixt her and the raging animal, which, ad-

<sup>1</sup> [See a note to *Castle Dangerous*.]



vancing in full career, its brutal fury enhanced by the rapidity of the pursuit, was now within a few yards of them. The Lord Keeper had no weapons; his age and gravity dispensed even with the usual appendage of a walking sword — could such appendage have availed him anything.

It seemed inevitable that the father or daughter, or both, should have fallen victims to the impending danger, when a shot from the neighbouring thicket arrested the progress of the animal. He was so truly struck between the junction of the spine with the skull, that the wound, which in any other part of his body might scarce have impeded his career, proved instantly fatal. Stumbling forward with a hideous bellow, the progressive force of his previous motion, rather than any operation of his limbs, carried him up to within three yards of the astonished Lord Keeper, where he rolled on the ground, his limbs darkened with the black death-sweat, and quivering with the last convulsions of muscular motion.

Lucy lay senseless on the ground, insensible of the wonderful deliverance which she had experienced. Her father was almost equally stupified, so rapid and unexpected had been the transition from the horrid death which seemed inevitable to perfect security. He gazed on the animal, terrible even in death, with a species of mute and confused astonishment, which did not permit him distinctly to understand what had taken place; and so inaccurate was his consciousness of what had passed, that he might have supposed the bull had been arrested in its career by a thunderbolt, had he not observed among the branches of the thicket the figure of a man, with a short gun or musketoon in his hand.

This instantly recalled him to a sense of their situation: a glance at his daughter reminded him of the necessity of procuring her assistance. He called to the man, whom he concluded to be one of his foresters, to give immediate attention to Miss Ashton, while he himself hastened to call assistance. The huntsman approached them accordingly, and the Lord Keeper saw he was a stranger, but was too much agitated to make any farther remarks. In a few hurried words he directed the shooter, as stronger and more active than himself, to carry the young lady to a neighbouring fountain, while he went back to Alice's hut to procure more aid.

The man, to whose timely interference they had been so much indebted did not seem inclined to leave his good work half finished. He raised Lucy from the ground in his arms,

and conveying her through the glades of the forest by paths with which he seemed well acquainted, stopped not until he laid her in safety by the side of a plentiful and pellucid fountain, which had been once covered in, screened and decorated with architectural ornaments of a Gothic character. But now the vault which had covered it being broken down and riven, and the Gothic font ruined and demolished, the stream burst forth from the recess of the earth in open day, and winded its way among the broken sculpture and moss-grown stones which lay in confusion around its source.

Tradition, always busy, at least in Scotland, to grace with a legendary tale a spot in itself interesting, had ascribed a cause of peculiar veneration to this fountain. A beautiful young lady met one of the Lords of Ravenswood while hunting near this spot, and, like a second Egeria, had captivated the affections of the feudal Numa. They met frequently afterwards, and always at sunset, the charms of the nymph's mind completing the conquest which her beauty had begun, and the mystery of the intrigue adding zest to both. She always appeared and disappeared close by the fountain, with which, therefore, her lover judged she had some inexplicable connexion. She placed certain restrictions on their intercourse, which also savoured of mystery. They met only once a-week — Friday was the appointed day — and she explained to the Lord of Ravenswood that they were under the necessity of separating so soon as the bell of a chapel, belonging to a hermitage in the adjoining wood, now long ruinous, should toll the hour of vespers. In the course of his confession, the Baron of Ravenswood entrusted the hermit with the secret of this singular amour, and Father Zachary drew the necessary and obvious consequence that his patron was enveloped in the toils of Satan, and in danger of destruction, both to body and soul. He urged these perils to the Baron with all the force of monkish rhetoric, and described, in the most frightful colours, the real character and person of the apparently lovely Naiad, whom he hesitated not to denounce as a limb of the kingdom of darkness. The lover listened with obstinate incredulity; and it was not until worn out by the obstinacy of the anchoret that he consented to put the state and condition of his mistress to a certain trial, and for that purpose acquiesced in Zachary's proposal that on their next interview the vespers' bell should be rung half an hour later than usual. The hermit maintained and bucklered his opinion, by quotations from *Malleus Malificarum*, Spren-

gerus, Remigius, and other learned demonologists, that the Evil One, thus seduced to remain behind the appointed hour, would assume her true shape, and, having appeared to her terrified lover as a fiend of hell, would vanish from him in a flash of sulphurous lightning. Raymond of Ravenswood acquiesced in the experiment, not incurious concerning the issue, though confident it would disappoint the expectations of the hermit.

At the appointed hour the lovers met, and their interview was protracted beyond that at which they usually parted, by the delay of the priest to ring his usual curfew. No change took place upon the nymph's outward form; but as soon as the lengthening shadows made her aware that the usual hour of the vespers' chime was passed, she tore herself from her lover's arms with a shriek of despair, bid him adieu for ever, and, plunging into the fountain, disappeared from his eyes. The bubbles occasioned by her descent were crimsoned with blood as they arose, leading the distracted Baron to infer that his ill-judged curiosity had occasioned the death of this interesting and mysterious being. The remorse which he felt, as well as the recollection of her charms, proved the penance of his future life, which he lost in the battle of Flodden not many months after. But, in memory of his Naiad, he had previously ornamented the fountain in which she appeared to reside, and secured its waters from profanation or pollution by the small vaulted building of which the fragments still remained scattered around it. From this period the house of Ravenswood was supposed to have dated its decay.

Such was the generally-received legend, which some, who would seem wiser than the vulgar, explained as obscurely intimating the fate of a beautiful maid of plebeian rank, the mistress of this Raymond, whom he slew in a fit of jealousy, and whose blood was mingled with the waters of the locked fountain, as it was commonly called. Others imagined that the tale had a more remote origin in the ancient heathen mythology. All, however, agreed that the spot was fatal to the Ravenswood family; and that to drink of the waters of the well, or even approach its brink, was as ominous to a descendant of that house as for a Grahame to wear green, a Bruce to kill a spider, or a St. Clair to cross the Ord on a Monday.

It was on this ominous spot that Lucy Ashton first drew breath after her long and almost deadly swoon. Beautiful and pale as the fabulous Naiad in the last agony of separation from her lover, she was seated so as to rest with her back against a

part of the ruined wall, while her mantle, dripping with the water which her protector had used profusely to recall her senses, clung to her slender and beautifully proportioned form.

The first moment of recollection brought to her mind the danger which had overpowered her senses ; the next called to remembrance that of her father. She looked around ; he was nowhere to be seen. 'My father, my father !' was all that she could ejaculate.

'Sir William is safe,' answered the voice of a stranger — 'perfectly safe, and will be with you instantly.'

'Are you sure of that ?' exclaimed Lucy. 'The bull was close by us. Do not stop me : I must go to seek my father !'

And she arose with that purpose ; but her strength was so much exhausted that, far from possessing the power to execute her purpose, she must have fallen against the stone on which she had leant, probably not without sustaining serious injury.

The stranger was so near to her that, without actually suffering her to fall, he could not avoid catching her in his arms, which, however, he did with a momentary reluctance, very unusual when youth interposes to prevent beauty from danger. It seemed as if her weight, slight as it was, proved too heavy for her young and athletic assistant, for, without feeling the temptation of detaining her in his arms even for a single instant, he again placed her on the stone from which she had risen, and retreating a few steps, repeated hastily, 'Sir William Ashton is perfectly safe, and will be here instantly. Do not make yourself anxious on his account : Fate has singularly preserved him. You, madam, are exhausted, and must not think of rising until you have some assistance more suitable than mine.'

Lucy, whose senses were by this time more effectually collected, was naturally led to look at the stranger with attention. There was nothing in his appearance which should have rendered him unwilling to offer his arm to a young lady who required support, or which could have induced her to refuse his assistance ; and she could not help thinking, even in that moment, that he seemed cold and reluctant to offer it. A shooting-dress of dark cloth intimated the rank of the wearer, though concealed in part by a large and loose cloak of a dark brown colour. A montero cap and a black feather drooped over the wearer's brow, and partly concealed his features, which, so far as seen, were dark, regular, and full of majestic, though somewhat sullen, expression. Some secret sorrow, or the brooding spirit of some moody passion, had quenched the light and ingenuous vivacity

of youth in a countenance singularly fitted to display both, and it was not easy to gaze on the stranger without a secret impression either of pity or awe, or at least of doubt and curiosity allied to both.

The impression which we have necessarily been long in describing, Lucy felt in the glance of a moment, and had no sooner encountered the keen black eyes of the stranger than her own were bent on the ground with a mixture of bashful embarrassment and fear. Yet there was a necessity to speak, or at least she thought so, and in a fluttered accent she began to mention her wonderful escape, in which she was sure that the stranger must, under Heaven, have been her father's protector and her own.

He seemed to shrink from her expressions of gratitude, while he replied abruptly, 'I leave you, madam,' the deep melody of his voice rendered powerful, but not harsh, by something like a severity of tone — 'I leave you to the protection of those to whom it is possible you may have this day been a guardian angel.'

Lucy was surprised at the ambiguity of his language, and, with a feeling of artless and unaffected gratitude, began to deprecate the idea of having intended to give her deliverer any offence, as if such a thing had been possible. 'I have been unfortunate,' she said, 'in endeavouring to express my thanks — I am sure it must be so, though I cannot recollect what I said; but would you but stay till my father — till the Lord Keeper comes; would you only permit him to pay you his thanks, and to inquire your name?'

'My name is unnecessary,' answered the stranger; 'your father — I would rather say Sir William Ashton — will learn it soon enough, for all the pleasure it is likely to afford him.'

'You mistake him,' said Lucy, earnestly; 'he will be grateful for my sake and for his own. You do not know my father, or you are deceiving me with a story of his safety, when he has already fallen a victim to the fury of that animal.'

When she had caught this idea, she started from the ground and endeavoured to press towards the avenue in which the accident had taken place, while the stranger, though he seemed to hesitate between the desire to assist and the wish to leave her, was obliged, in common humanity, to oppose her both by entreaty and action.

'On the word of a gentleman, madam, I tell you the truth; your father is in perfect safety; you will expose yourself to



injury if you venture back where the herd of wild cattle grazed. If you will go' — for, having once adopted the idea that her father was still in danger, she pressed forward in spite of him — 'if you *will* go, accept my arm, though I am not perhaps the person who can with most propriety offer you support.'

But, without heeding this intimation, Lucy took him at his word. 'O, if you be a man,' she said — 'if you be a gentleman, assist me to find my father! You shall not leave me — you must go with me; he is dying perhaps while we are talking here!'

Then, without listening to excuse or apology, and holding fast by the stranger's arm, though unconscious of anything save the support which it gave, and without which she could not have moved, mixed with a vague feeling of preventing his escape from her, she was urging, and almost dragging, him forward when Sir William Ashton came up, followed by the female attendant of blind Alice, and by two wood-cutters, whom he had summoned from their occupation to his assistance. His joy at seeing his daughter safe overcame the surprise with which he would at another time have beheld her hanging as familiarly on the arm of a stranger as she might have done upon his own.

'Lucy, my dear Lucy, are you safe? — are you well?' were the only words that broke from him as he embraced her in ecstasy.

'I am well, sir, thank God! and still more that I see you so; but this gentleman,' she said, quitting his arm and shrinking from him, 'what must he think of me?' and her eloquent blood, flushing over neck and brow, spoke how much she was ashamed of the freedom with which she had craved, and even compelled, his assistance.

'This gentleman,' said Sir William Ashton, 'will, I trust, not regret the trouble we have given him, when I assure him of the gratitude of the Lord Keeper for the greatest service which one man ever rendered to another — for the life of my child — for my own life, which he has saved by his bravery and presence of mind. He will, I am sure, permit us to request —'

'Request nothing of ME, my lord,' said the stranger, in a stern and peremptory tone; 'I am the Master of Ravenswood.'

There was a dead pause of surprise, not unmixed with less pleasant feelings. The Master wrapt himself in his cloak, made a haughty inclination towards Lucy, muttering a few

words of courtesy, as indistinctly heard as they seemed to be reluctantly uttered, and, turning from them, was immediately lost in the thicket.

‘The Master of Ravenswood!’ said the Lord Keeper, when he had recovered his momentary astonishment. ‘Hasten after him — stop him — beg him to speak to me for a single moment.’

The two foresters accordingly set off in pursuit of the stranger. They speedily reappeared, and, in an embarrassed and awkward manner, said the gentleman would not return.

The Lord Keeper took one of the fellows aside, and questioned him more closely what the Master of Ravenswood had said.

‘He just said he wadna come back,’ said the man, with the caution of a prudent Scotchman, who cared not to be the bearer of an unpleasant errand.

‘He said something more, sir,’ said the Lord Keeper, ‘and I insist on knowing what it was.’

‘Why, then, my lord,’ said the man, looking down, ‘he said — But it wad be nae pleasure to your lordship to hear it, for I daresay the Master meant nae ill.’

‘That’s none of your concern, sir; I desire to hear the very words.’

‘Weel, then,’ replied the man, ‘he said, “Tell Sir William Ashton that the next time he and I forgather, he will not be half sae blithe of our meeting as of our parting.”’

‘Very well, sir,’ said the Lord Keeper, ‘I believe he alludes to a wager we have on our hawks; it is a matter of no consequence.’

He turned to his daughter, who was by this time so much recovered as to be able to walk home. But the effect, which the various recollections connected with a scene so terrific made upon a mind which was susceptible in an extreme degree, was more permanent than the injury which her nerves had sustained. Visions of terror, both in sleep and in waking reveries, recalled to her the form of the furious animal, and the dreadful bellow with which he accompanied his career; and it was always the image of the Master of Ravenswood, with his native nobleness of countenance and form, that seemed to interpose betwixt her and assured death. It is, perhaps, at all times dangerous for a young person to suffer recollection to dwell repeatedly, and with too much complacency, on the same individual; but in Lucy’s situation it was almost unavoidable. She had never happened to see a young man of mien and features so romantic and so striking as young Ravenswood;

but had she seen an hundred his equals or his superiors in those particulars, no one else could have been linked to her heart by the strong associations of remembered danger and escape, of gratitude, wonder, and curiosity. I say curiosity, for it is likely that the singularly restrained and unaccommodating manners of the Master of Ravenswood, so much at variance with the natural expression of his features and grace of his deportment, as they excited wonder by the contrast, had their effect in riveting her attention to the recollection. She knew little of Ravenswood, or the disputes which had existed betwixt her father and his, and perhaps could in her gentleness of mind hardly have comprehended the angry and bitter passions which they had engendered. But she knew that he was come of noble stem ; was poor, though descended from the noble and the wealthy ; and she felt that she could sympathise with the feelings of a proud mind, which urged him to recoil from the proffered gratitude of the new proprietors of his father's house and domains. Would he have equally shunned their acknowledgments and avoided their intimacy, had her father's request been urged more mildly, less abruptly, and softened with the grace which women so well know how to throw into their manner, when they mean to mediate betwixt the headlong passions of the ruder sex ? This was a perilous question to ask her own mind — perilous both in the idea and in its consequences.

Lucy Ashton, in short, was involved in those mazes of the imagination which are most dangerous to the young and the sensitive. Time, it is true, absence, change of scene and new faces, might probably have destroyed the illusion in her instance, as it has done in many others ; but her residence remained solitary, and her mind without those means of dissipating her pleasing visions. This solitude was chiefly owing to the absence of Lady Ashton, who was at this time in Edinburgh, watching the progress of some state-intrigue ; the Lord Keeper only received society out of policy or ostentation, and was by nature rather reserved and unsociable ; and thus no cavalier appeared to rival or to obscure the ideal picture of chivalrous excellence which Lucy had pictured to herself in the Master of Ravenswood.

While Lucy indulged in these dreams, she made frequent visits to old blind Alice, hoping it would be easy to lead her to talk on the subject which at present she had so imprudently admitted to occupy so large a portion of her thoughts. But

Alice did not in this particular gratify her wishes and expectations. She spoke readily, and with pathetic feeling, concerning the family in general, but seemed to observe an especial and cautious silence on the subject of the present representative. The little she said of him was not altogether so favourable as Lucy had anticipated. She hinted that he was of a stern and unforgiving character, more ready to resent than to pardon injuries; and Lucy combined, with great alarm, the hints which she now dropped of these dangerous qualities with Alice's advice to her father, so emphatically given, 'to beware of Ravenswood.'

But that very Ravenswood, of whom such unjust suspicions had been entertained, had, almost immediately after they had been uttered, confuted them by saving at once her father's life and her own. Had he nourished such black revenge as Alice's dark hints seemed to indicate, no deed of active guilt was necessary to the full gratification of that evil passion. He needed but to have withheld for an instant his indispensable and effective assistance, and the object of his resentment must have perished, without any direct aggression on his part, by a death equally fearful and certain. She conceived, therefore, that some secret prejudice, or the suspicions incident to age and misfortune, had led Alice to form conclusions injurious to the character, and irreconcilable both with the generous conduct and noble features, of the Master of Ravenswood. And in this belief Lucy reposed her hope, and went on weaving her enchanted web of fairy tissue, as beautiful and transient as the film of the gossamer when it is pearly with the morning dew and glimmering to the sun.

Her father, in the meanwhile, as well as the Master of Ravenswood, were making reflections, as frequent though more solid than those of Lucy, upon the singular event which had taken place. The Lord Keeper's first task, when he returned home, was to ascertain by medical advice that his daughter had sustained no injury from the dangerous and alarming situation in which she had been placed. Satisfied on this topic, he proceeded to revise the memoranda which he had taken down from the mouth of the person employed to interrupt the funeral service of the late Lord Ravenswood. Bred to casuistry, and well accustomed to practise the ambidexter ingenuity of the bar, it cost him little trouble to soften the features of the tumult which he had been at first so anxious to exaggerate. He preached to his colleagues of the privy council the necessity of using

conciliatory measures with young men, whose blood and temper were hot, and their experience of life limited. He did not hesitate to attribute some censure to the conduct of the officer, as having been unnecessarily irritating.

These were the contents of his public despatches. The letters which he wrote to those private friends into whose management the matter was likely to fall were of a yet more favourable tenor. He represented that lenity in this case would be equally politic and popular, whereas, considering the high respect with which the rites of interment are regarded in Scotland, any severity exercised against the Master of Ravenswood for protecting those of his father from interruption, would be on all sides most unfavourably construed. And, finally, assuming the language of a generous and high-spirited man, he made it his particular request that this affair should be passed over without severe notice. He alluded with delicacy to the predicament in which he himself stood with young Ravenswood, as having succeeded in the long train of litigation by which the fortunes of that noble house had been so much reduced, and confessed it would be most peculiarly acceptable to his feelings, could he find means in some sort to counterbalance the disadvantages which he had occasioned the family, though only in the prosecution of his just and lawful rights. He therefore made it his particular and personal request that the matter should have no farther consequences, and insinuated a desire that he himself should have the merit of having put a stop to it by his favourable report and intercession. It was particularly remarkable that, contrary to his uniform practice, he made no special communication to Lady Ashton upon the subject of the tumult; and although he mentioned the alarm which Lucy had received from one of the wild cattle, yet he gave no detailed account of an incident so interesting and terrible.

There was much surprise among Sir William Ashton's political friends and colleagues on receiving letters of a tenor so unexpected. On comparing notes together, one smiled, one put up his eyebrows, a third nodded acquiescence in the general wonder, and a fourth asked if they were sure these were *all* the letters the Lord Keeper had written on the subject. 'It runs strangely in my mind, my lords, that none of these advices contain the root of the matter.'

But no secret letters of a contrary nature had been received, although the question seemed to imply the possibility of their existence.



‘Well,’ said an old grey-headed statesman, who had contrived, by shifting and trimming, to maintain his post at the steerage through all the changes of course which the vessel had held for thirty years, ‘I thought Sir William would hae verified the auld Scottish saying, “As soon comes the lamb’s skin to market as the auld tup’s.”’

‘We must please him after his own fashion,’ said another, ‘though it be an unlooked-for one.’

‘A wilful man maun hae his way,’ answered the old counsellor.

‘The Keeper will rue this before year and day are out,’ said a third; ‘the Master of Ravenswood is the lad to wind him a pirn.’<sup>1</sup>

‘Why, what would you do, my lords, with the poor young fellow?’ said a noble Marquis present. ‘The Lord Keeper has got all his estates; he has not a cross to bless himself with.’

On which the ancient Lord Turntippet replied,

‘If he hasna gear to fine,  
He has shins to pine.

And that was our way before the Revolution: *Luitur cum persona, qui luere non potest cum crumena*.<sup>2</sup> Hegh, my lords, that’s gude law Latin.’

‘I can see no motive,’ replied the Marquis, ‘that any noble lord can have for urging this matter farther; let the Lord Keeper have the power to deal in it as he pleases.’

‘Agree, agree — remit to the Lord Keeper, with any other person for fashion’s sake — Lord Hirplehooly, who is bed-ridden — one to be a quorum. Make your entry in the minutes, Mr. Clerk. And now, my lords, there is that young scattergood the Laird of Bucklaw’s fine to be disposed upon. I suppose it goes to my Lord Treasurer?’

‘Shame be in my meal-poke, then,’ exclaimed Lord Turntippet, ‘and your hand aye in the nook of it! I had set that down for a bye-bit between meals for myself.’

‘To use one of your favourite saws, my lord,’ replied the Marquis, ‘you are like the miller’s dog, that licks his lips before the bag is untied: the man is not fined yet.’

‘But that costs but twa skarts of a pen,’ said Lord Turntippet; ‘and surely there is nae noble lord that will presume to say that I, wha hae complied wi’ a’ compliances, taen all manner of tests, abjured all that was to be abjured, and sworn

<sup>1</sup> *Wind him a pirn*, proverbial for preparing a troublesome business for some person.

<sup>2</sup> *i. e.*, Let him pay with his person, who cannot pay with his purse.

a' that was to be sworn, for these thirty years bye-past, sticking fast by my duty to the state through good report and bad report, shouldna hae something now and then to synd my mouth wi' after sic drouthy wark? Eh?'

'It would be very unreasonable indeed, my lord,' replied the Marquis, 'had we either thought that your lordship's drought was quenchable, or observed anything stick in your throat that required washing down.'

And so we close the scene on the privy council of that period.

## CHAPTER VI

For this are all these warriors come,  
To hear an idle tale ;  
And o'er our death-accustom'd arms  
Shall silly tears prevail ?

HENRY MACKENZIE.

ON the evening of the day when the Lord Keeper and his daughter were saved from such imminent peril, two strangers were seated in the most private apartment of a small obscure inn, or rather alehouse, called the 'Tod's Den,' about three or four miles from the Castle of Ravenswood and as far from the ruinous tower of Wolf's Crag, betwixt which two places it was situated.

One of these strangers was about forty years of age, tall, and thin in the flanks, with an aquiline nose, dark penetrating eyes, and a shrewd but sinister cast of countenance. The other was about fifteen years younger, short, stout, ruddy-faced, and red-haired, with an open, resolute, and cheerful eye, to which careless and fearless freedom and inward daring gave fire and expression, notwithstanding its light grey colour. A stoup of wine (for in those days it was served out from the cask in pewter flagons) was placed on the table, and each had his quagh or bicker<sup>1</sup> before him. But there was little appearance of conviviality. With folded arms, and looks of anxious expectation, they eyed each other in silence, each wrapt in his own thoughts, and holding no communication with his neighbour. At length the younger broke silence by exclaiming, 'What the foul fiend can detain the Master so long ? He must have miscarried in his enterprise. Why did you dissuade me from going with him ?'

'One man is enough to right his own wrong,' said the taller

<sup>1</sup> Drinking cups of different sizes, made out of staves hooped together. The *quagh* was used chiefly for drinking wine or brandy ; it might hold about a gill, and was often composed of rare wood, and curiously ornamented with silver.

and older personage ; ' we venture our lives for him in coming thus far on such an errand.'

' You are but a craven after all, Craigengelt,' answered the younger, ' and that's what many folk have thought you before now.'

' But what none has dared to tell me,' said Craigengelt, laying his hand on the hilt of his sword ; ' and, but that I hold a hasty man no better than a fool, I would —— ' he paused for his companion's answer.

' *Would* you ? ' said the other, coolly ; ' and why do you not then ?'

Craigengelt drew his cutlass an inch or two, and then returned it with violence into the scabbard — ' Because there is a deeper stake to be played for than the lives of twenty harebrained gowks like you.'

' You are right there,' said his companion, ' for if it were not that these forfeitures, and that last fine that the old driveller Turntippet is gaping for, and which, I daresay, is laid on by this time, have fairly driven me out of house and home, I were a coxcomb and a cuckoo to boot to trust your fair promises of getting me a commission in the Irish brigade. What have I to do with the Irish brigade ? I am a plain Scotchman, as my father was before me ; and my grand-aunt, Lady Girnington, cannot live for ever.'

' Ay, Bucklaw,' observed Craigengelt, ' but she may live for many a long day ; and for your father, he had land and living, kept himself close from wadsetters and money-lenders, paid each man his due, and lived on his own.'

' And whose fault is it that I have not done so too ? ' said Bucklaw — ' whose but the devil's and yours, and such-like as you, that have led me to the far end of a fair estate ? And now I shall be obliged, I suppose, to shelter and shift about like yourself : live one week upon a line of secret intelligence from Saint Germain's ; another upon a report of a rising in the Highlands ; get my breakfast and morning draught of sack from old Jacobite ladies, and give them locks of my old wig for the Chevalier's hair ; second my friend in his quarrel till he comes to the field, and then flinch from him lest so important a political agent should perish from the way. All this I must do for bread, besides calling myself a captain !'

' You think you are making a fine speech now,' said Craigengelt, ' and showing much wit at my expense. Is starving or hanging better than the life I am obliged to lead, because the present fortunes of the king cannot sufficiently support his envoys ?'

‘Starving is honest, Craigengelt, and hanging is like to be the end on’t. But what you mean to make of this poor fellow Ravenswood, I know not. He has no money left, any more than I ; his lands are all pawned and pledged, and the interest eats up the rents, and is not satisfied, and what do you hope to make by meddling in his affairs ?’

‘Content yourself, Bucklaw ; I know my business,’ replied Craigengelt. ‘Besides that his name, and his father’s services in 1689, will make such an acquisition sound well both at Versailles and Saint Germain, you will also please be informed that the Master of Ravenswood is a very different kind of a young fellow from you. He has parts and address, as well as courage and talents, and will present himself abroad like a young man of head as well as heart, who knows something more than the speed of a horse or the flight of a hawk. I have lost credit of late, by bringing over no one that had sense to know more than how to unharbour a stag, or take and reclaim an eyas. The Master has education, sense, and penetration.’

‘And yet is not wise enough to escape the tricks of a kidnapper, Craigengelt ?’ replied the younger man. ‘But don’t be angry ; you know you will not fight, and so it is as well to leave your hilt in peace and quiet, and tell me in sober guise how you drew the Master into your confidence ?’

‘By flattering his love of vengeance, Bucklaw,’ answered Craigengelt. ‘He has always distrusted me ; but I watched my time, and struck while his temper was red-hot with the sense of insult and of wrong. He goes now to expostulate, as he says, and perhaps thinks, with Sir William Ashton. I say, that if they meet, and the lawyer puts him to his defence, the Master will kill him ; for he had that sparkle in his eye which never deceives you when you would read a man’s purpose. At any rate, he will give him such a bullying as will be construed into an assault on a privy councillor ; so there will be a total breach betwixt him and government. Scotland will be too hot for him ; France will gain him ; and we will all set sail together in the French brig “L’Espoir,” which is hovering for us off Eyemouth.’

‘Content am I,’ said Bucklaw ; ‘Scotland has little left that I care about ; and if carrying the Master with us will get us a better reception in France, why, so be it, a God’s name. I doubt our own merits will procure us slender preferment ; and I trust he will send a ball through the Keeper’s head before he joins us. One or two of these scoundrel statesman should be



shot once a-year, just to keep the others on their good behaviour.'

'That is very true,' replied Craigengelt; 'and it reminds me that I must go and see that our horses have been fed, and are in readiness; for, should such deed be done, it will be no time for grass to grow beneath their heels.' He proceeded as far as the door, then turned back with a look of earnestness, and said to Bucklaw, 'Whatever should come of this business, I am sure you will do me the justice to remember that I said nothing to the Master which could imply my accession to any act of violence which he may take it into his head to commit.'

'No, no, not a single word like accession,' replied Bucklaw; 'you know too well the risk belonging to these two terrible words, "art and part."' Then, as if to himself, he recited the following lines:—

'The dial spoke not, but it made shrewd signs,  
And pointed full upon the stroke of murder.'

'What is that you are talking to yourself?' said Craigengelt, turning back with some anxiety.

'Nothing, only two lines I have heard upon the stage,' replied his companion.

'Bucklaw,' said Craigengelt, 'I sometimes think you should have been a stage-player yourself; all is fancy and frolic with you.'

'I have often thought so myself,' said Bucklaw. 'I believe it would be safer than acting with you in the Fatal Conspiracy. But away, play your own part, and look after the horses like a groom as you are. A play-actor—a stage-player!' he repeated to himself; 'that would have deserved a stab, but that Craigengelt's a coward. And yet I should like the profession well enough. Stay, let me see; ay, I would come out in *Alexander*—

Thus from the grave I rise to save my love,  
Draw all your swords, and quick as lightning move.  
When I rush on, sure none will dare to stay;  
'T is love commands, and glory leads the way.'

As with a voice of thunder, and his hand upon his sword, Bucklaw repeated the ranting couplets of poor Lee, Craigengelt re-entered with a face of alarm.

'We are undone, Bucklaw! The Master's led horse has cast himself over his halter in the stable, and is dead lame. His

hackney will be set up with the day's work, and now he has no fresh horse ; he will never get off.'

'Egad, there will be no moving with the speed of lightning this bout,' said Bucklaw, drily. 'But stay, you can give him yours.'

'What! and be taken myself? I thank you for the proposal,' said Craigengelt.

'Why,' replied Bucklaw, 'if the Lord Keeper should have met with a mischance, which for my part I cannot suppose, for the Master is not the lad to shoot an old and unarmed man — but *if* there should have been a fray at the Castle, you are neither art nor part in it, you know, so have nothing to fear.'

'True, true,' answered the other, with embarrassment ; 'but consider my commission from Saint Germain's.'

'Which many men think is a commission of your own making, noble Captain. Well, if you will not give him your horse, why, d—n it, he must have mine.'

'Yours?' said Craigengelt.

'Ay, mine,' repeated Bucklaw ; 'it shall never be said that I agreed to back a gentleman in a little affair of honour, and neither helped him on with it nor off from it.'

'You will give him your horse? and have you considered the loss?'

'Loss! why, Grey Gilbert cost me twenty Jacobuses, that's true ; but then his hackney is worth something, and his Black Moor is worth twice as much were he sound, and I know how to handle him. Take a fat sucking mastiff whelp, flay and bowel him, stuff the body full of black and grey snails, roast a reasonable time, and baste with oil of spikenard, saffron, cinnamon, and honey, anoint with the dripping, working it in —'

'Yes, Bucklaw ; but in the meanwhile, before the sprain is cured, nay, before the whelp is roasted, you will be caught and hung. Depend on it, the chase will be hard after Ravenswood. I wish we had made our place of rendezvous nearer to the coast.'

'On my faith, then,' said Bucklaw, 'I had best go off just now, and leave my horse for him. Stay — stay, he comes : I hear a horse's feet.'

'Are you sure there is only one?' said Craigengelt. 'I fear there is a chase ; I think I hear three or four galloping together. I am sure I hear more horses than one.'

‘Pooh, pooh, it is the wench of the house clattering to the well in her pattens. By my faith, Captain, you should give up both your captainship and your secret service, for you are as easily scared as a wild goose. But here comes the Master alone, and looking as gloomy as a night in November.’

The Master of Ravenswood entered the room accordingly, his cloak muffled around him, his arms folded, his looks stern, and at the same time dejected. He flung his cloak from him as he entered, threw himself upon a chair, and appeared sunk in a profound reverie.

‘What has happened? What have you done?’ was hastily demanded by Craigenfelt and Bucklaw in the same moment.

‘Nothing,’ was the short and sullen answer.

‘Nothing! and left us, determined to call the old villain to account for all the injuries that you, we, and the country have received at his hand? Have you seen him?’

‘I have,’ replied the Master of Ravenswood.

‘Seen him — and come away without settling scores which have been so long due?’ said Bucklaw; ‘I would not have expected that at the hand of the Master of Ravenswood.’

‘No matter what you expected,’ replied Ravenswood; ‘it is not to you, sir, that I shall be disposed to render any reason for my conduct.’

‘Patience, Bucklaw,’ said Craigenfelt, interrupting his companion, who seemed about to make an angry reply. ‘The Master has been interrupted in his purpose by some accident; but he must excuse the anxious curiosity of friends who are devoted to his cause like you and me.’

‘Friends, Captain Craigenfelt!’ retorted Ravenswood, haughtily; ‘I am ignorant what familiarity has passed betwixt us to entitle you to use that expression. I think our friendship amounts to this, that we agreed to leave Scotland together so soon as I should have visited the alienated mansion of my fathers, and had an interview with its present possessor — I will not call him proprietor.’

‘Very true, Master,’ answered Bucklaw; ‘and as we thought you had a mind to do something to put your neck in jeopardy, Craigie and I very courteously agreed to tarry for you, although ours might run some risk in consequence. As to Craigie, indeed, it does not very much signify: he had gallows written on his brow in the hour of his birth; but I should not like to discredit my parentage by coming to such an end in another man’s cause.’

‘Gentlemen,’ said the Master of Ravenswood, ‘I am sorry if

I have occasioned you any inconvenience, but I must claim the right of judging what is best for my own affairs, without rendering explanations to any one. I have altered my mind, and do not design to leave the country this season.'

'Not to leave the country, Master!' exclaimed Craigenfelt. 'Not to go over, after all the trouble and expense I have incurred — after all the risk of discovery, and the expense of demurrage!'

'Sir,' replied the Master of Ravenswood, 'when I designed to leave this country in this haste, I made use of your obliging offer to procure me means of conveyance; but I do not recollect that I pledged myself to go off, if I found occasion to alter my mind. For your trouble on my account, I am sorry, and I thank you; your expense,' he added, putting his hand into his pocket, 'admits a more solid compensation: freight and demurrage are matters with which I am unacquainted, Captain Craigenfelt, but take my purse and pay yourself according to your own conscience.' And accordingly he tendered a purse with some gold in it to the *soi-disant* captain.

But here Bucklaw interposed in his turn. 'Your fingers, Craigie, seem to itch for that same piece of green network,' said he; 'but I make my vow to God, that if they offer to close upon it, I will chop them off with my whinger. Since the Master has changed his mind, I suppose we need stay here no longer; but in the first place I beg leave to tell him ——'

'Tell him anything you will,' said Craigenfelt, 'if you will first allow me to state the inconveniences to which he will expose himself by quitting our society, to remind him of the obstacles to his remaining here, and of the difficulties attending his proper introduction at Versailles and Saint Germain's without the countenance of those who have established useful connexions.'

'Besides forfeiting the friendship,' said Bucklaw, 'of at least one man of spirit and honour.'

'Gentlemen,' said Ravenswood, 'permit me once more to assure you that you have been pleased to attach to our temporary connexion more importance than I ever meant that it should have. When I repair to foreign courts, I shall not need the introduction of an intriguing adventurer, nor is it necessary for me to set value on the friendship of a hot-headed bully.' With these words, and without waiting for an answer, he left the apartment, remounted his horse, and was heard to ride off.

'Mortbleu!' said Captain Craigenfelt, 'my recruit is lost!'

'Ay, Captain,' said Bucklaw, 'the salmon is off with hook and

all. But I will after him, for I have had more of his insolence than I can well digest.'

Craigengelt offered to accompany him ; but Bucklaw replied, 'No, no, Captain, keep you the cheek of the chimney-nook till I come back ; it's good sleeping in a haill skin.

Little kens the auld wife that sits by the fire,  
How cauld the wind blaws in hurle-burle swire.'

And singing as he went, he left the apartment.



## CHAPTER VII

Now, Billy Bewick, keep good heart,  
And of thy talking let me be;  
But if thou art a man, as I am sure thou art,  
Come over the dike and fight with me.

*Old Ballad.*

THE Master of Ravenswood had mounted the ambling hackney which he before rode, on finding the accident which had happened to his led horse, and, for the animal's ease, was proceeding at a slow pace from the Tod's Den towards his old tower of Wolf's Crag,<sup>1</sup> when he heard the galloping of a horse behind him, and, looking back, perceived that he was pursued by young Bucklaw, who had been delayed a few minutes in the pursuit by the irresistible temptation of giving the hostler at the Tod's Den some recipe for treating the lame horse. This brief delay he had made up by hard galloping, and now overtook the Master where the road traversed a waste moor. 'Halt, sir,' cried Bucklaw; 'I am no political agent—no Captain Craigenfelt, whose life is too important to be hazarded in defence of his honour. I am Frank Hayston of Bucklaw, and no man injures me by word, deed, sign, or look, but he must render me an account of it.'

'This is all very well, Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw,' replied the Master of Ravenswood, in a tone the most calm and indifferent; 'but I have no quarrel with you, and desire to have none. Our roads homeward, as well as our roads through life, lie in different directions; there is no occasion for us crossing each other.'

'Is there not?' said Bucklaw, impetuously. 'By Heaven! but I say that there is, though: you call us intriguing adventurers.'

'Be correct in your recollection, Mr. Hayston; it was to your companion only I applied that epithet, and you know him to be no better.'

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<sup>1</sup> See Introduction to *Chronicles of the Canongate (Laing)*.

'And what then? He was my companion for the time, and no man shall insult my companion, right or wrong, while he is in my company.'

'Then, Mr. Hayston,' replied Ravenswood, with the same composure, 'you should choose your society better, or you are like to have much work in your capacity of their champion. Go home, sir; sleep, and have more reason in your wrath to-morrow.'

'Not so, Master, you have mistaken your man; high airs and wise saws shall not carry it off thus. Besides, you termed me bully, and you shall retract the word before we part.'

'Faith, scarcely,' said Ravenswood, 'unless you show me better reason for thinking myself mistaken than you are now producing.'

'Then, Master,' said Bucklaw, 'though I should be sorry to offer it to a man of your quality, if you will not justify your incivility, or retract it, or name a place of meeting, you must here undergo the hard word and the hard blow.'

'Neither will be necessary,' said Ravenswood; 'I am satisfied with what I have done to avoid an affair with you. If you are serious, this place will serve as well as another.'

'Dismount then, and draw,' said Bucklaw, setting him an example. 'I always thought and said you were a pretty man; I should be sorry to report you otherwise.'

'You shall have no reason, sir,' said Ravenswood, alighting, and putting himself into a posture of defence.

Their swords crossed, and the combat commenced with great spirit on the part of Bucklaw, who was well accustomed to affairs of the kind, and distinguished by address and dexterity at his weapon. In the present case, however, he did not use his skill to advantage; for, having lost temper at the cool and contemptuous manner in which the Master of Ravenswood had long refused, and at length granted, him satisfaction, and urged by his impatience, he adopted the part of an assailant with inconsiderate eagerness. The Master, with equal skill, and much greater composure, remained chiefly on the defensive, and even declined to avail himself of one or two advantages afforded him by the eagerness of his adversary. At length, in a desperate lunge, which he followed with an attempt to close, Bucklaw's foot slipped, and he fell on the short grassy turf on which they were fighting. 'Take your life, sir,' said the Master of Ravenswood, 'and mend it if you can.'

'It would be but a cobbled piece of work, I fear,' said Buck-

law, rising slowly and gathering up his sword, much less disconcerted with the issue of the combat than could have been expected from the impetuosity of his temper. 'I thank you for my life, Master,' he pursued. 'There is my hand; I bear no ill-will to you, either for my bad luck or your better swordmanship.'

The Master looked steadily at him for an instant, then extended his hand to him. 'Bucklaw,' he said, 'you are a generous fellow, and I have done you wrong. I heartily ask your pardon for the expression which offended you; it was hastily and incautiously uttered, and I am convinced it is totally misapplied.'

'Are you indeed, Master?' said Bucklaw, his face resuming at once its natural expression of light-hearted carelessness and audacity; 'that is more than I expected of you; for, Master, men say you are not ready to retract your opinions and your language.'

'Not when I have well considered them,' said the Master.

'Then you are a little wiser than I am, for I always give my friend satisfaction first, and explanation afterwards. If one of us falls, all accounts are settled; if not, men are never so ready for peace as after war. But what does that bawling brat of a boy want?' said Bucklaw. 'I wish to Heaven he had come a few minutes sooner! and yet it must have been ended some time, and perhaps this way is as well as any other.'

As he spoke, the boy he mentioned came up, cudgelling an ass, on which he was mounted, to the top of its speed, and sending, like one of Ossian's heroes, his voice before him—'Gentlemen—gentlemen, save yourselves! for the gudewife bade us tell ye there were folk in her house had taen Captain Craigengelt, and were seeking for Bucklaw, and that ye behoved to ride for it.'

'By my faith, and that's very true, my man,' said Bucklaw; 'and there's a silver sixpence for your news, and I would give any man twice as much would tell me which way I should ride.'

'That will I, Bucklaw,' said Ravenswood; 'ride home to Wolf's Crag with me. There are places in the old tower where you might lie hid, were a thousand men to seek you.'

'But that will bring you into trouble yourself, Master; and unless you be in the Jacobite scrape already, it is quite needless for me to drag you in.'

'Not a whit; I have nothing to fear.'

'Then I will ride with you blithely, for, to say the truth, I do not know the rendezvous that Craigie was to guide us to this night; and I am sure that, if he is taken, he will tell all the truth of me, and twenty lies of you, in order to save himself from the withie.'

They mounted and rode off in company accordingly, striking off the ordinary road, and holding their way by wild moorish unfrequented paths, with which the gentlemen were well acquainted from the exercise of the chase, but through which others would have had much difficulty in tracing their course. They rode for some time in silence, making such haste as the condition of Ravenswood's horse permitted, until night having gradually closed around them, they discontinued their speed, both from the difficulty of discovering their path, and from the hope that they were beyond the reach of pursuit or observation.

'And now that we have drawn bridle a bit,' said Bucklaw, 'I would fain ask you a question, Master.'

'Ask, and welcome,' said Ravenswood, 'but forgive my not answering it, unless I think proper.'

'Well, it is simply this,' answered his late antagonist: 'What, in the name of old Sathan, could make you, who stand so highly on your reputation, think for a moment of drawing up with such a rogue as Craigengelt, and such a scapegrace as folk call Bucklaw?'

'Simply, because I was desperate, and sought desperate associates.'

'And what made you break off from us at the nearest?' again demanded Bucklaw.

'Because I had changed my mind,' said the Master, 'and renounced my enterprise, at least for the present. And now that I have answered your questions fairly and frankly, tell me what makes you associate with Craigengelt, so much beneath you both in birth and in spirit?'

'In plain terms,' answered Bucklaw, 'because I am a fool, who have gambled away my land in these times. My grand-aunt, Lady Girnington, has taen a new tack of life, I think, and I could only hope to get something by a change of government. Craigie was a sort of gambling acquaintance; he saw my condition, and, as the devil is always at one's elbow, told me fifty lies about his credentials from Versailles, and his interest at Saint Germain, promised me a captain's commission at Paris, and I have been ass enough to put my thumb under

his belt. I daresay, by this time, he has told a dozen pretty stories of me to the government. And this is what I have got by wine, woman, and dice, cocks, dogs, and horses.'

'Yes, Bucklaw,' said the Master, 'you have indeed nourished in your bosom the snakes that are now stinging you.'

'That 's home as well as true, Master,' replied his companion ; 'but, by your leave, you have nursed in your bosom one great goodly snake that has swallowed all the rest, and is as sure to devour you as my half-dozen are to make a meal on all that 's left of Bucklaw, which is but what lies between bonnet and boot-heel.'

'I must not,' answered the Master of Ravenswood, 'challenge the freedom of speech in which I have set example. What, to speak without a metaphor, do you call this monstrous passion which you charge me with fostering?'

'Revenge, my good sir—revenge ; which, if it be as gentlemanlike a sin as wine and wassail, with their *et cæteras*, is equally unchristian, and not so bloodless. It is better breaking a park-pale to watch a doe or damsel than to shoot an old man.'

'I deny the purpose,' said the Master of Ravenswood. 'On my soul, I had no such intention ; I meant but to confront the oppressor ere I left my native land, and upbraid him with his tyranny and its consequences. I would have stated my wrongs so that they would have shaken his soul within him.'

'Yes,' answered Bucklaw, 'and he would have collared you, and cried "help," and then you would have shaken the soul out of him, I suppose. Your very look and manner would have frightened the old man to death.'

'Consider the provocation,' answered Ravenswood — 'consider the ruin and death procured and caused by his hard-hearted cruelty—an ancient house destroyed, an affectionate father murdered ! Why, in our old Scottish days, he that sat quiet under such wrongs would have been held neither fit to back a friend nor face a foe.'

'Well, Master, I am glad to see that the devil deals as cunningly with other folk as he deals with me ; for whenever I am about to commit any folly, he persuades me it is the most necessary, gallant, gentlemanlike thing on earth, and I am up to saddlegirths in the bog before I see that the ground is soft. And you, Master, might have turned out a murd— a homicide, just out of pure respect for your father's memory.'

'There is more sense in your language, Bucklaw,' replied



the Master, 'than might have been expected from your conduct. It is too true, our vices steal upon us in forms outwardly as fair as those of the demons whom the superstitious represent as intriguing with the human race, and are not discovered in their native hideousness until we have clasped them in our arms.'

'But we may throw them from us, though,' said Bucklaw, 'and that is what I shall think of doing one of these days — that is, when old Lady Girnington dies.'

'Did you ever hear the expression of the English divine?' said Ravenswood — "'Hell is paved with good intentions," — as much as to say, they are more often formed than executed.'

'Well,' replied Bucklaw, 'but I will begin this blessed night, and have determined not to drink above one quart of wine, unless your claret be of extraordinary quality.'

'You will find little to tempt you at Wolf's Crag,' said the Master. 'I know not that I can promise you more than the shelter of my roof; all, and more than all, our stock of wine and provisions was exhausted at the late occasion.'

'Long may it be ere provision is needed for the like purpose,' answered Bucklaw; 'but you should not drink up the last flask at a dirge; there is ill luck in that.'

'There is ill luck, I think, in whatever belongs to me,' said Ravenswood. 'But yonder is Wolf's Crag, and whatever it still contains is at your service.'

The roar of the sea had long announced their approach to the cliffs, on the summit of which, like the nest of some sea-eagle, the founder of the fortalice had perched his eyrie. The pale moon, which had hitherto been contending with flitting clouds, now shone out, and gave them a view of the solitary and naked tower, situated on a projecting cliff that beetled on the German Ocean. On three sides the rock was precipitous; on the fourth, which was that towards the land, it had been originally fenced by an artificial ditch and drawbridge, but the latter was broken down and ruinous, and the former had been in part filled up, so as to allow passage for a horseman into the narrow courtyard, encircled on two sides with low offices and stables, partly ruinous, and closed on the landward front by a low embattled wall, while the remaining side of the quadrangle was occupied by the tower itself, which, tall and narrow, and built of a greyish stone, stood glimmering in the moonlight, like the sheeted spectre of some huge giant. A wilder or more disconsolate dwelling it was perhaps difficult to conceive. The

sombrous and heavy sound of the billows, successively dashing against the rocky beach at a profound distance beneath, was to the ear what the landscape was to the eye — a symbol of unvaried and monotonous melancholy, not unmingled with horror.

Although the night was not far advanced, there was no sign of living inhabitant about this forlorn abode, excepting that one, and only one, of the narrow and stanchelled windows which appeared at irregular heights and distances in the walls of the building showed a small glimmer of light.

‘There,’ said Ravenswood, ‘sits the only male domestic that remains to the house of Ravenswood ; and it is well that he does remain there, since otherwise we had little hope to find either light or fire. But follow me cautiously ; the road is narrow, and admits only one horse in front.’

In effect, the path led along a kind of isthmus, at the peninsular extremity of which the tower was situated, with that exclusive attention to strength and security, in preference to every circumstance of convenience, which dictated to the Scottish barons the choice of their situations, as well as their style of building.

By adopting the cautious mode of approach recommended by the proprietor of this wild hold, they entered the courtyard in safety. But it was long ere the efforts of Ravenswood, though loudly exerted by knocking at the low-browed entrance, and repeated shouts to Caleb to open the gate and admit them, received any answer.

‘The old man must be departed,’ he began to say, ‘or fallen into some fit ; for the noise I have made would have waked the seven sleepers.’

At length a timid and hesitating voice replied, ‘Master — Master of Ravenswood, is it you ?’

‘Yes, it is I, Caleb ; open the door quickly.’

‘But is it you in very blood and body ? For I would sooner face fifty deevils as my master’s ghaist, or even his wraith ; wherefore, aroint ye, if ye were ten times my master, unless ye come in bodily shape, lith and limb.’

‘It is I, you old fool,’ answered Ravenswood, ‘in bodily shape and alive, save that I am half dead with cold.’

The light at the upper window disappeared, and glancing from loophole to loophole in slow succession, gave intimation that the bearer was in the act of descending, with great deliberation, a winding staircase occupying one of the turrets

which graced the angles of the old tower. The tardiness of his descent extracted some exclamations of impatience from Ravenswood, and several oaths from his less patient and more mercurial companion. Caleb again paused ere he unbolted the door, and once more asked if they were men of mould that demanded entrance at this time of night.

‘Were I near you, you old fool,’ said Bucklaw, ‘I would give you sufficient proofs of *my* bodily condition.’

‘Open the gate, Caleb,’ said his master, in a more soothing tone, partly from his regard to the ancient and faithful seneschal, partly perhaps because he thought that angry words would be thrown away, so long as Caleb had a stout iron-clenched oaken door betwixt his person and the speakers.

At length Caleb, with a trembling hand, undid the bars, opened the heavy door, and stood before them, exhibiting his thin grey hairs, bald forehead, and sharp high features, illuminated by a quivering lamp which he held in one hand, while he shaded and protected its flame with the other. The timorous, courteous glance which he threw around him, the effect of the partial light upon his white hair and illumined features, might have made a good painting; but our travellers were too impatient for security against the rising storm to permit them to indulge themselves in studying the picturesque. ‘Is it you, my dear master? — is it you yourself, indeed?’ exclaimed the old domestic. ‘I am wae ye suld hae stude waiting at your ain gate; but wha wad hae thought o’ seeing ye sae sune, and a strange gentleman with a —— (Here he exclaimed apart, as it were, and to some inmate of the tower, in a voice not meant to be heard by those in the court) Mysie — Mysie, woman! stir for dear life, and get the fire mended; take the auld three-legged stool, or any thing that’s readiest that will make a lowe. I doubt we are but puirly provided, no expecting ye this some months, when doubtless ye wad hae been received conform till your rank, as gude right is; but natheless ——’

‘Natheless, Caleb,’ said the Master, ‘we must have our horses put up, and ourselves too, the best way we can. I hope you are not sorry to see me sooner than you expected?’

‘Sorry, my lord! I am sure ye sall aye be my lord wi’ honest folk, as your noble ancestors hae been these three hundred years, and never asked a Whig’s leave. Sorry to see the Lord of Ravenswood at ane o’ his ain castles! (Then again apart to his unseen associate behind the screen) Mysie, kill the brood-hen without thinking twice on it; let them care that

come ahint. No to say it's our best dwelling,' he added, turning to Bucklaw; 'but just a strength for the Lord of Ravenswood to flee until — that is, not to *flee*, but to retreat until in troublous times, like the present, when it was ill convenient for him to live farther in the country in any of his better and mair principal manors; but, for its antiquity, maist folk think that the outside of Wolf's Crag is worthy of a large perusal.'

'And you are determined we shall have time to make it,' said Ravenswood, somewhat amused with the shifts the old man used to detain them without doors until his confederate Mysie had made her preparations within.

'O, never mind the outside of the house, my good friend,' said Bucklaw; 'let's see the inside, and let our horses see the stable, that's all.'

'O yes, sir — ay, sir — unquestionably, sir — my lord and any of his honourable companions ——'

'But our horses, my old friend — our horses; they will be dead-foundered by standing here in the cold after riding hard, and mine is too good to be spoiled; therefore, once more, our horses,' exclaimed Bucklaw.

'True — ay — your horses — yes — I will call the grooms'; and sturdily did Caleb roar till the old tower rang again — 'John — William — Saunders! The lads are gane out, or sleeping,' he observed, after pausing for an answer, which he knew that he had no human chance of receiving. 'A' gaes wrang when the Master's out-bye; but I'll take care o' your cattle mysell.'

'I think you had better,' said Ravenswood, 'otherwise I see little chance of their being attended to at all.'

'Whisht, my lord — whisht, for God's sake,' said Caleb, in an imploring tone, and apart to his master; 'if ye dinna regard your ain credit, think on mine; we'll hae hard enough wark to mak a decent night o't, wi' a' the lees I can tell.'

'Well, well, never mind,' said his master; 'go to the stable. There is hay and corn, I trust?'

'Ou ay, plenty of hay and corn'; this was uttered boldly and aloud, and, in a lower tone, 'there was some half fous o' aits, and some taits o' meadow-hay, left after the burial.'

'Very well,' said Ravenswood, taking the lamp from his domestic's unwilling hand, 'I will show the stranger upstairs myself.'

'I canna think o' that, my lord; if ye wad but have five minutes', or ten minutes', or, at maist, a quarter of an hour's patience, and look at the fine moonlight prospect of the Bass

and North Berwick Law till I sort the horses, I would marshal ye up, as reason is ye suld be marshalled, your lordship and your honourable visitor. And I hae lockit up the siller candlesticks, and the lamp is not fit ——’

‘It will do very well in the meantime,’ said Ravenswood, ‘and you will have no difficulty for want of light in the stable, for, if I recollect, half the roof is off.’

‘Very true, my lord,’ replied the trusty adherent, and with ready wit instantly added, ‘and the lazy sclater loons have never come to put it on a’ this while, your lordship.’

‘If I were disposed to jest at the calamities of my house,’ said Ravenswood, as he led the way upstairs, ‘poor old Caleb would furnish me with ample means. His passion consists in representing things about our miserable menage, not as they are, but as, in his opinion, they ought to be; and, to say the truth, I have been often diverted with the poor wretch’s expedients to supply what he thought was essential for the credit of the family, and his still more generous apologies for the want of those articles for which his ingenuity could discover no substitute. But though the tower is none of the largest, I shall have some trouble without him to find the apartment in which there is a fire.’

As he spoke thus, he opened the door of the hall. ‘Here, at least,’ he said, ‘there is neither hearth nor harbour.’

It was indeed a scene of desolation. A large vaulted room, the beams of which, combined like those of Westminster Hall, were rudely carved at the extremities, remained nearly in the situation in which it had been left after the entertainment at Allan Lord Ravenswood’s funeral. Overturned pitchers, and black-jacks, and pewter stoups, and flagons still encumbered the large oaken table; glasses, those more perishable implements of conviviality, many of which had been voluntarily sacrificed by the guests in their enthusiastic pledges to favourite toasts, strewed the stone floor with their fragments. As for the articles of plate, lent for the purpose by friends and kinsfolk, those had been carefully withdrawn so soon as the ostentatious display of festivity, equally unnecessary and strangely timed, had been made and ended. Nothing, in short, remained that indicated wealth; all the signs were those of recent wastefulness and present desolation. The black cloth hangings, which, on the late mournful occasion, replaced the tattered moth-eaten tapestries, had been partly pulled down, and, dangling from the wall in irregular festoons, disclosed the rough stonework



of the building, unsmoothed either by plaster or the chisel. The seats thrown down, or left in disorder, intimated the careless confusion which had concluded the mournful revel. 'This room,' said Ravenswood, holding up the lamp — 'this room, Mr. Hayston, was riotous when it should have been sad ; it is a just retribution that it should now be sad when it ought to be cheerful.'

They left this disconsolate apartment, and went upstairs, where, after opening one or two doors in vain, Ravenswood led the way into a little matted ante-room, in which, to their great joy, they found a tolerably good fire, which Mysie, by some such expedient as Caleb had suggested, had supplied with a reasonable quantity of fuel. Glad at the heart to see more of comfort than the castle had yet seemed to offer, Bucklaw rubbed his hands heartily over the fire, and now listened with more complacency to the apologies which the Master of Ravenswood offered. 'Comfort,' he said, 'I cannot provide for you, for I have it not for myself ; it is long since these walls have known it, if, indeed, they were ever acquainted with it. Shelter and safety, I think, I can promise you.'

'Excellent matters, Master,' replied Bucklaw, 'and, with a mouthful of food and wine, positively all I can require to-night.'

'I fear,' said the Master, 'your supper will be a poor one ; I hear the matter in discussion betwixt Caleb and Mysie. Poor Balderstone is something deaf, amongst his other accomplishments, so that much of what he means should be spoken aside is overheard by the whole audience, and especially by those from whom he is most anxious to conceal his private manœuvres. Hark !'

They listened, and heard the old domestic's voice in conversation with Mysie to the following effect : —

'Just mak the best o't — mak the best o't, woman ; it's easy to put a fair face on any thing.'

'But the auld brood-hen ? She'll be as teugh as bow-strings and bend-leather !'

'Say ye made a mistake — say ye made a mistake, Mysie,' replied the faithful seneschal, in a soothing and undertoned voice ; 'tak it a' on yoursell ; never let the credit o' the house suffer.'

'But the brood-hen,' remonstrated Mysie — 'ou, she's sitting some gate aneath the dais in the hall, and I am feared to gae in in the dark for the bogle ; and if I didna see the bogle, I

could as ill see the hen, for it's pit-mirk, and there's no another light in the house, save that very blessed iamp whilk the Master has in his ain hand. And if I had the hen, she's to pu', and to draw, and to dress; how can I do that, and them sitting by the only fire we have?'

'Weel, weel, Mysie,' said the butler, 'bide ye there a wee, and I'll try to get the lamp wiled away frae them.'

Accordingly, Caleb Balderstone entered the apartment, little aware that so much of his by-play had been audible there. 'Well, Caleb, my old friend, is there any chance of supper?' said the Master of Ravenswood.

'*Chance* of supper, your lordship?' said Caleb, with an emphasis of strong scorn at the implied doubt. 'How should there be any question of that, and us in your lordship's house? *Chance* of supper, indeed! But ye'll no be for butcher-meat? There's walth o' fat poultry, ready either for spit or brander. The fat capon, Mysie!' he added, calling out as boldly as if such a thing had been in existence.

'Quite unnecessary,' said Bucklaw, who deemed himself bound in courtesy to relieve some part of the anxious butler's perplexity, 'if you have anything cold, or a morsel of bread.'

'The best of bannocks!' exclaimed Caleb, much relieved; 'and, for cauld meat, a' that we hae is cauld eneugh, — howbeit, maist of the cauld meat and pastry was gien to the puir folk after the ceremony of interment, as gude reason was; nevertheless ——'

'Come, Caleb,' said the Master of Ravenswood, 'I must cut this matter short. This is the young Laird of Bucklaw; he is under hiding, and therefore, you know ——'

'He'll be nae nicer than your lordship's honour, I'se warrant,' answered Caleb, cheerfully, with a nod of intelligence; 'I am sorry that the gentleman is under distress, but I am blithe that he canna say muckle agane our housekeeping, for I believe his ain pinches may match ours; no that we are pinched, thank God,' he added, retracting the admission which he had made in his first burst of joy, 'but nae doubt we are waur aff than we hae been, or suld be. And for eating — what signifies telling a lee? there's just the hinder end of the mutton-ham that has been but three times on the table, and the nearer the bane the sweeter, as your honours weel ken; and — there's the heel of the ewe-milk kebbuck, wi' a bit of nice butter, and — and — that's a' that's to trust to.' And with great alacrity he produced his slender

stock of provisions, and placed them with much formality upon a small round table betwixt the two gentlemen, who were not deterred either by the homely quality or limited quantity of the repast from doing it full justice. Caleb in the meanwhile waited on them with grave officiousness, as if anxious to make up, by his own respectful assiduity, for the want of all other attendance.

But, alas ! how little on such occasions can form, however anxiously and scrupulously observed, supply the lack of substantial fare ! Bucklaw, who had eagerly eaten a considerable portion of the thrice-sacked mutton-ham, now began to demand ale.

‘I wadna just presume to recommend our ale,’ said Caleb ; ‘the maut was ill made, and there was awfu’ thunner last week ; but siccan water as the Tower well has ye ’ll seldom see, Bucklaw, and that I’se engage for.’

‘But if your ale is bad, you can let us have some wine,’ said Bucklaw, making a grimace at the mention of the pure element which Caleb so earnestly recommended.

‘Wine !’ answered Caleb, undauntedly, ‘eneugh of wine ! It was but twa days syne — wae ’s me for the cause — there was as much wine drunk in this house as would have floated a pinnace. There never was lack of wine at Wolf’s Crag.’

‘Do fetch us some then,’ said his master, ‘instead of talking about it.’ And Caleb boldly departed.

Every expended butt in the old cellar did he set a-tilt, and shake with the desperate expectation of collecting enough of the grounds of claret to fill the large pewter measure which he carried in his hand. Alas ! each had been too devoutly drained ; and, with all the squeezing and manœuvring which his craft as a butler suggested, he could only collect about half a quart that seemed presentable. Still, however, Caleb was too good a general to renounce the field without a stratagem to cover his retreat. He undauntedly threw down an empty flagon, as if he had stumbled at the entrance of the apartment, called upon Mysie to wipe up the wine that had never been spilt, and placing the other vessel on the table, hoped there was still enough left for their honours. There was indeed ; for even Bucklaw, a sworn friend to the grape, found no encouragement to renew his first attack on the vintage of Wolf’s Crag, but contented himself, however reluctantly, with a draught of fair water. Arrangements were now made for his repose ; and as the secret chamber was assigned for this purpose, it furnished

Caleb with a first-rate and most plausible apology for all deficiencies of furniture, bedding, etc.

‘For wha,’ said he, ‘would have thought of the secret chaumer being needed? It has not been used since the time of the Gowrie Conspiracy, and I durst never let a woman ken of the entrance to it, or your honour will allow that it wad not hae been a secret chaumer lang.’

## CHAPTER VIII

The hearth in hall was black and dead,  
No board was dight in bower within,  
Nor merry bowl, nor welcome bed ;  
‘ Here ’s sorry cheer,’ quoth the Heir of Linne.

*Old Ballad.*

THE feelings of the prodigal Heir of Linne, as expressed in that excellent old song, when, after dissipating his whole fortune, he found himself the deserted inhabitant of ‘the lonely lodge,’ might perhaps have some resemblance to those of the Master of Ravenswood in his deserted mansion of Wolf’s Crag. The Master, however, had this advantage over the spendthrift in the legend, that, if he was in similar distress, he could not impute it to his own imprudence. His misery had been bequeathed to him by his father, and, joined to his high blood, and to a title which the courteous might give or the churlish withhold at their pleasure, it was the whole inheritance he had derived from his ancestry.

Perhaps this melancholy yet consolatory reflection crossed the mind of the unfortunate young nobleman with a breathing of comfort. Favourable to calm reflection, as well as to the Muses, the morning, while it dispelled the shades of night, had a composing and sedative effect upon the stormy passions by which the Master of Ravenswood had been agitated on the preceding day. He now felt himself able to analyse the different feelings by which he was agitated, and much resolved to combat and to subdue them. The morning, which had arisen calm and bright, gave a pleasant effect even to the waste moorland view which was seen from the castle on looking to the landward ; and the glorious ocean, crisped with a thousand rippling waves of silver, extended on the other side, in awful yet complacent majesty, to the verge of the horizon. With such scenes of calm sublimity the human heart sympathises even in its most disturbed moods, and deeds of honour and virtue are inspired by their majestic influence.



To seek out Bucklaw in the retreat which he had afforded him was the first occupation of the Master, after he had performed, with a scrutiny unusually severe, the important task of self-examination. 'How now, Bucklaw?' was his morning's salutation — 'how like you the couch in which the exiled Earl of Angus once slept in security, when he was pursued by the full energy of a king's resentment?'

'Umph!' returned the sleeper awakened; 'I have little to complain of where so great a man was quartered before me, only the mattress was of the hardest, the vault somewhat damp, the rats rather more mutinous than I would have expected from the state of Caleb's larder; and if there had been shutters to that grated window, or a curtain to the bed, I should think it, upon the whole, an improvement in your accommodations.'

'It is, to be sure, forlorn enough,' said the Master, looking around the small vault; 'but if you will rise and leave it, Caleb will endeavour to find you a better breakfast than your supper of last night.'

'Pray, let it be no better,' said Bucklaw, getting up, and endeavouring to dress himself as well as the obscurity of the place would permit — 'let it, I say, be no better, if you mean me to persevere in my proposed reformation. The very recollection of Caleb's beverage has done more to suppress my longing to open the day with a morning draught than twenty sermons would have done. And you, Master, have you been able to give battle valiantly to your bosom-snake? You see I am in the way of smothering my vipers one by one.'

'I have commenced the battle, at least, Bucklaw, and I have had a fair vision of an angel who descended to my assistance,' replied the Master.

'Woe's me!' said his guest, 'no vision can I expect, unless my aunt, Lady Girnington, should betake herself to the tomb; and then it would be the substance of her heritage rather than the appearance of her phantom that I should consider as the support of my good resolutions. But this same breakfast, Master — does the deer that is to make the pasty run yet on foot, as the ballad has it?'

'I will inquire into that matter,' said his entertainer; and, leaving the apartment, he went in search of Caleb, whom, after some difficulty, he found in an obscure sort of dungeon, which had been in former times the buttery of the castle. Here the old man was employed busily in the doubtful task of burnishing a pewter flagon until it should take the hue and semblance of

silver-plate. 'I think it may do — I think it might pass, if they winna bring it ower muckle in the light o' the window!' were the ejaculations which he muttered from time to time, as if to encourage himself in his undertaking, when he was interrupted by the voice of his master.

'Take this,' said the Master of Ravenswood, 'and get what is necessary for the family.' And with these words he gave to the old butler the purse which had on the preceding evening so narrowly escaped the fangs of Craigenfelt.

The old man shook his silvery and thin locks, and looked with an expression of the most heartfelt anguish at his master as he weighed in his hand the slender treasure, and said in a sorrowful voice, 'And is this a' that's left?'

'All that is left at present,' said the Master, affecting more cheerfulness than perhaps he really felt, 'is just the green purse and the wee pickle gowd, as the old song says; but we shall do better one day, Caleb.'

'Before that day comes,' said Caleb, 'I doubt there will be an end of an auld sang, and an auld serving-man to boot. But it disna become me to speak that gate to your honour, and you looking sae pale. Tak back the purse, and keep it to be making a show before company; for if your honour would just tak a bidding, and be whiles taking it out afore folk and putting it up again, there's naebody would refuse us trust, for a' that's come and gane yet.'

'But, Caleb,' said the Master, 'I still intend to leave this country very soon, and I desire to do so with the reputation of an honest man, leaving no debt behind me, at least of my own contracting.'

'And gude right ye suld gang away as a true man, and so ye shall; for auld Caleb can tak the wyte of whatever is taen on for the house, and then it will be a' just ae man's burden; and I will live just as weel in the tolbooth as out of it, and the credit of the family will be a' safe and sound.'

The Master endeavoured, in vain, to make Caleb comprehend that the butler's incurring the responsibility of debts in his own person would rather add to than remove the objections which he had to their being contracted. He spoke to a premier too busy in devising ways and means to puzzle himself with refuting the arguments offered against their justice or expediency.

'There's Eppie Sma'trash will trust us for ale,' said Caleb to himself — 'she has lived a' her life under the family — and maybe wi' a soup brandy; I canna say for wine — she is but a

lone woman, and gets her claret by a runlet at a time ; but I'll work a wee drap out o' her by fair means or foul. For doos, there's the doocot ; there will be poultry amang the tenants, though Luckie Chirnside says she has paid the kain twice ower. We'll mak shift, an it like your honour — we'll mak shift ; keep your heart abune, for the house sall haud its credit as lang as auld Caleb is to the fore.'

The entertainment which the old man's exertions of various kinds enabled him to present to the young gentlemen for three or four days was certainly of no splendid description, but it may readily be believed it was set before no critical guests ; and even the distresses, excuses, evasions, and shifts of Caleb afforded amusement to the young men, and added a sort of interest to the scrambling and irregular style of their table. They had indeed occasion to seize on every circumstance that might serve to diversify or enliven time, which otherwise passed away so heavily.

Bucklaw, shut out from his usual field-sports and joyous carouses by the necessity of remaining concealed within the walls of the castle, became a joyless and uninteresting companion. When the Master of Ravenswood would no longer fence or play at shovel-board ; when he himself had polished to the extremity the coat of his palfrey with brush, currycomb, and hair-cloth ; when he had seen him eat his provender, and gently lie down in his stall, he could hardly help envying the animal's apparent acquiescence in a life so monotonous. 'The stupid brute,' he said, 'thinks neither of the race-ground or the hunting-field, or his green paddock at Bucklaw, but enjoys himself as comfortably when haltered to the rack in this ruinous vault, as if he had been foaled in it ; and I, who have the freedom of a prisoner at large, to range through the dungeons of this wretched old tower, can hardly, betwixt whistling and sleeping, contrive to pass away the hour till dinner-time.'

And with this disconsolate reflection, he wended his way to the bartizan or battlements of the tower, to watch what objects might appear on the distant moor, or to pelt, with pebbles and pieces of lime, the sea-mews and cormorants which established themselves incautiously within the reach of an idle young man.

Ravenswood, with a mind incalculably deeper and more powerful than that of his companion, had his own anxious subjects of reflection, which wrought for him the same unhappiness that sheer *ennui* and want of occupation inflicted on his companion. The first sight of Lucy Ashton had been less

impressive than her image proved to be upon reflection. As the depth and violence of that revengeful passion by which he had been actuated in seeking an interview with the father began to abate by degrees, he looked back on his conduct towards the daughter as harsh and unworthy towards a female of rank and beauty. Her looks of grateful acknowledgment, her words of affectionate courtesy, had been repelled with something which approached to disdain; and if the Master of Ravenswood had sustained wrongs at the hand of Sir William Ashton, his conscience told him they had been unhandsomely resented towards his daughter. When his thoughts took this turn of self-reproach, the recollection of Lucy Ashton's beautiful features, rendered yet more interesting by the circumstances in which their meeting had taken place, made an impression upon his mind at once soothing and painful. The sweetness of her voice, the delicacy of her expressions, the vivid glow of her filial affection, embittered his regret at having repulsed her gratitude with rudeness, while, at the same time, they placed before his imagination a picture of the most seducing sweetness.

Even young Ravenswood's strength of moral feeling and rectitude of purpose at once increased the danger of cherishing these recollections, and the propensity to entertain them. Firmly resolved as he was to subdue, if possible, the predominating vice in his character, he admitted with willingness — nay, he summoned up in his imagination — the ideas by which it could be most powerfully counteracted; and, while he did so, a sense of his own harsh conduct towards the daughter of his enemy naturally induced him, as if by way of recompense, to invest her with more of grace and beauty than perhaps she could actually claim.

Had any one at this period told the Master of Ravenswood that he had so lately vowed vengeance against the whole lineage of him whom he considered, not unjustly, as author of his father's ruin and death, he might at first have repelled the charge as a foul calumny; yet, upon serious self-examination, he would have been compelled to admit that it had, at one period, some foundation in truth, though, according to the present tone of his sentiments, it was difficult to believe that this had really been the case.

There already existed in his bosom two contradictory passions — a desire to revenge the death of his father, strangely qualified by admiration of his enemy's daughter. Against the former feeling he had struggled, until it seemed to him upon the wane;

against the latter he used no means of resistance, for he did not suspect its existence. That this was actually the case was chiefly evinced by his resuming his resolution to leave Scotland. Yet, though such was his purpose, he remained day after day at Wolf's Crag, without taking measures for carrying it into execution. It is true, that he had written to one or two kinsmen who resided in a distant quarter of Scotland, and particularly to the Marquis of A——, intimating his purpose; and when pressed upon the subject by Bucklaw, he was wont to allege the necessity of waiting for their reply, especially that of the Marquis, before taking so decisive a measure.

The Marquis was rich and powerful; and although he was suspected to entertain sentiments unfavourable to the government established at the Revolution, he had nevertheless address enough to head a party in the Scottish privy council, connected with the High Church faction in England, and powerful enough to menace those to whom the Lord Keeper adhered with a probable subversion of their power. The consulting with a personage of such importance was a plausible excuse, which Ravenswood used to Bucklaw, and probably to himself, for continuing his residence at Wolf's Crag; and it was rendered yet more so by a general report which began to be current of a probable change of ministers and measures in the Scottish administration. These rumours, strongly asserted by some, and as resolutely denied by others, as their wishes or interest dictated, found their way even to the ruinous 'Tower of Wolf's Crag, chiefly through the medium of Caleb, the butler, who, among his other excellences, was an ardent politician, and seldom made an excursion from the old fortress to the neighbouring village of Wolf's Hope without bringing back what tidings were current in the vicinity.

But if Bucklaw could not offer any satisfactory objections to the delay of the Master in leaving Scotland, he did not the less suffer with impatience the state of inaction to which it confined him; and it was only the ascendancy which his new companion had acquired over him that induced him to submit to a course of life so alien to his habits and inclinations.

'You were wont to be thought a stirring active young fellow, Master,' was his frequent remonstrance; 'yet here you seem determined to live on and on like a rat in a hole, with this trifling difference, that the wiser vermin chooses a hermitage where he can find food at least; but as for us, Caleb's excuses become longer as his diet turns more spare, and I fear we shall



realise the stories they tell of the sloth : we have almost eat up the last green leaf on the plant, and have nothing left for it but to drop from the tree and break our necks.'

'Do not fear it,' said Ravenswood ; 'there is a fate watches for us, and we too have a stake in the revolution that is now impending, and which already has alarmed many a bosom.'

'What fate — what revolution ?' inquired his companion. 'We have had one revolution too much already, I think.'

Ravenswood interrupted him by putting into his hands a letter.

'O,' answered Bucklaw, 'my dream's out. I thought I heard Caleb this morning pressing some unfortunate fellow to a drink of cold water, and assuring him it was better for his stomach in the morning than ale or brandy.'

'It was my Lord of A——'s courier,' said Ravenswood, 'who was doomed to experience his ostentatious hospitality, which I believe ended in sour beer and herrings. Read, and you will see the news he has brought us.'

'I will as fast as I can,' said Bucklaw ; 'but I am no great clerk, nor does his lordship seem to be the first of scribes.'

The reader will peruse, in a few seconds, by the aid of our friend Ballantyne's<sup>1</sup> types, what took Bucklaw a good half hour in perusal, though assisted by the Master of Ravenswood. The tenor was as follows : —

'RIGHT HONOURABLE OUR COUSIN,

'Our hearty commendations premised, these come to assure you of the interest which we take in your welfare, and in your purposes towards its augmentation. If we have been less active in showing forth our effective good-will towards you than, as a loving kinsman and blood-relative, we would willingly have desired, we request that you will impute it to lack of opportunity to show our good-liking, not to any coldness of our will. Touching your resolution to travel in foreign parts, as at this time we hold the same little advisable, in respect that your ill-willers may, according to the custom of such persons, impute motives for your journey, whereof, although we know and believe you to be as clear as ourselves, yet natheless their words may find credence in places where the belief in them may much prejudice you, and which we should see with more unwillingness and displeasure than with means of remedy.

'Having thus, as becometh our kindred, given you our poor

<sup>1</sup> See *The Ballantynes*. Note 3.

mind on the subject of your journeying forth of Scotland, we would willingly add reasons of weight, which might materially advantage you and your father's house, thereby to determine you to abide at Wolf's Crag, until this harvest season shall be passed over. But what sayeth the proverb, *verbum sapienti* — a word is more to him that hath wisdom than a sermon to a fool. And albeit we have written this poor scroll with our own hand, and are well assured of the fidelity of our messenger, as him that is many ways bounden to us, yet so it is, that slid-dery ways crave wary walking, and that we may not peril upon paper matters which we would gladly impart to you by word of mouth. Wherefore, it was our purpose to have prayed you heartily to come to this barren Highland country to kill a stag, and to treat of the matters which we are now more painfully inditing to you anent. But commodity does not serve at present for such our meeting, which, therefore, shall be deferred until sic time as we may in all mirth rehearse those things whereof we now keep silence. Meantime, we pray you to think that we are, and will still be, your good kinsman and well-wisher, waiting but for times of whilk we do, as it were, entertain a twilight prospect, and appear and hope to be also your effectual well-doer. And in which hope we heartily write ourself,

‘Right Honourable,

‘Your loving cousin,

‘A——.

‘Given from our poor house of B——,’ etc.

Superscribed — ‘For the right honourable, and our honoured kinsman, the Master of Ravenswood — These, with haste, haste, post haste — ride and run until these be delivered.’

‘What think you of this epistle, Bucklaw?’ said the Master, when his companion had hammered out all the sense, and almost all the words of which it consisted.

‘Truly, that the Marquis's meaning is as great a riddle as his manuscript. He is really in much need of *Wit's Interpreter*, or the *Complete Letter-Writer*, and were I you, I would send him a copy by the bearer. He writes you very kindly to remain wasting your time and your money in this vile, stupid, oppressed country, without so much as offering you the countenance and shelter of his house. In my opinion, he has some scheme in view in which he supposes you can be useful, and he

wishes to keep you at hand, to make use of you when it ripens, reserving the power of turning you adrift, should his plot fail in the concoction.'

'His plot! Then you suppose it is a treasonable business,' answered Ravenswood.

'What else can it be?' replied Bucklaw; 'the Marquis has been long suspected to have an eye to Saint Germain's.'

'He should not engage me rashly in such an adventure,' said Ravenswood; 'when I recollect the times of the first and second Charles, and of the last James, truly I see little reason that, as a man or a patriot, I should draw my sword for their descendants.'

'Humph!' replied Bucklaw; 'so you have set yourself down to mourn over the crop-eared dogs whom honest Claver'se treated as they deserved?'

'They first gave the dogs an ill name, and then hanged them,' replied Ravenswood. 'I hope to see the day when justice shall be open to Whig and Tory, and when these nicknames shall only be used among coffee-house politicians, as "slut" and "jade" are among apple-women, as cant terms of idle spite and rancour.'

'That will not be in our days, Master: the iron has entered too deeply into our sides and our souls.'

'It will be, however, one day,' replied the Master; 'men will not always start at these nicknames as at a trumpet-sound. As social life is better protected, its comforts will become too dear to be hazarded without some better reason than speculative politics.'

'It is fine talking,' answered Bucklaw; 'but my heart is with the old song —

To see good corn upon the rigs,  
And a gallows built to hang the Whigs,  
And the right restored where the right should be,  
O, that is the thing that would wanton me.'

'You may sing as loudly as you will, *cantabit vacuus* —,' answered the Master; 'but I believe the Marquis is too wise, at least too wary, to join you in such a burden. I suspect he alludes to a revolution in the Scottish privy council, rather than in the British kingdoms.'

'O, confusion to your state tricks!' exclaimed Bucklaw — 'your cold calculating manœuvres, which old gentlemen in wrought nightcaps and furred gowns execute like so many games at chess, and displace a treasurer or lord commissioner

as they would take a rook or a pawn. Tennis for my sport, and battle for my earnest! My racket and my sword for my plaything and bread-winner! And you, Master, so deep and considerate as you would seem, you have that within you makes the blood boil faster than suits your present humour of moralising on political truths. You are one of those wise men who see everything with great composure till their blood is up, and then — woe to any one who should put them in mind of their own prudential maxims!

‘Perhaps,’ said Ravenswood, ‘you read me more rightly than I can myself. But to think justly will certainly go some length in helping me to act so. But hark! I hear Caleb tolling the dinner-bell.’

‘Which he always does with the more sonorous grace in proportion to the meagreness of the cheer which he has provided,’ said Bucklaw; ‘as if that infernal clang and jangle, which will one day bring the belfry down the cliff, could convert a starved hen into a fat capon, and a blade-bone of mutton into a haunch of venison.’

‘I wish we may be so well off as your worst conjectures surmise, Bucklaw, from the extreme solemnity and ceremony with which Caleb seems to place on the table that solitary covered dish.’

‘Uncover, Caleb! uncover, for Heaven’s sake!’ said Bucklaw; ‘let us have what you can give us without preface. Why, it stands well enough, man,’ he continued, addressing impatiently the ancient butler, who, without reply, kept shifting the dish, until he at length placed it with mathematical precision in the very midst of the table.

‘What have we got here, Caleb?’ inquired the Master in his turn.

‘Ahem! sir, ye suld have known before; but his honour the Laird of Bucklaw is so impatient,’ answered Caleb, still holding the dish with one hand and the cover with the other, with evident reluctance to disclose the contents.

‘But what is it, a God’s name — not a pair of clean spurs, I hope, in the Border fashion of old times?’

‘Ahem! ahem!’ reiterated Caleb, ‘your honour is pleased to be facetious; natheless, I might presume to say it was a convenient fashion, and used, as I have heard, in an honourable and thriving family. But touching your present dinner, I judged that this being St. Magdalen’s Eve, who was a worthy queen of Scotland in her day, your honours might judge

it decorous, if not altogether to fast, yet only to sustain nature with some slight refection, as ane saulted herring or the like.' And, uncovering the dish, he displayed four of the savoury fishes which he mentioned, adding, in a subdued tone, 'that they were no just common herring neither, being every ane melters, and saulted with uncommon care by the housekeeper (poor Mysie) for his honour's especial use.'

'Out upon all apologies!' said the Master, 'let us eat the herrings, since there is nothing better to be had; but I begin to think with you, Bucklaw, that we are consuming the last green leaf, and that, in spite of the Marquis's political machinations, we must positively shift camp for want of forage, without waiting the issue of them.'



## CHAPTER IX

Ay, and when huntsmen wind the merry horn,  
And from its covert starts the fearful prey,  
Who, warm'd with youth's blood in his swelling veins,  
Would, like a lifeless clod, outstretched lie,  
Shut out from all the fair creation offers ?

*Ethwald, Act I. Scene I.*

LIGHT meals procure light slumbers ; and therefore it is not surprising that, considering the fare which Caleb's conscience, or his necessity, assuming, as will sometimes happen, that disguise, had assigned to the guests of Wolf's Crag, their slumbers should have been short.

In the morning Bucklaw rushed into his host's apartment with a loud halloo, which might have awaked the dead.

'Up ! up ! in the name of Heaven ! The hunters are out, the only piece of sport I have seen this month ; and you lie here, Master, on a bed that has little to recommend it, except that it may be something softer than the stone floor of your ancestor's vault.'

'I wish,' said Ravenswood, raising his head peevishly, 'you had forborne so early a jest, Mr. Hayston ; it is really no pleasure to lose the very short repose which I had just begun to enjoy, after a night spent in thoughts upon fortune far harder than my couch, Bucklaw.'

'Pshaw, pshaw !' replied his guest ; 'get up — get up ; the hounds are abroad. I have saddled the horses myself, for old Caleb was calling for grooms and lackeys, and would never have proceeded without two hours' apology for the absence of men that were a hundred miles off. Get up, Master ; I say the hounds are out — get up, I say ; the hunt is up.' And off ran Bucklaw.

'And I say,' said the Master, rising slowly, 'that nothing can concern me less. Whose hounds come so near to us ?'

'The Honourable Lord Bittlebrains,' answered Caleb, who

had followed the impatient Laird of Bucklaw into his master's bedroom, 'and truly I ken nae tittle they have to be yowling and howling within the freedoms and immunities of your lordship's right of free forestry.'

'Nor I, Caleb,' replied Ravenswood, 'excepting that they have bought both the lands and the right of forestry, and may think themselves entitled to exercise the rights they have paid their money for.'

'It may be sae, my lord,' replied Caleb; 'but it's no gentleman's deed of them to come here and exercise such-like right, and your lordship living at your ain castle of Wolf's Crag. Lord Bittlebrains would do weel to remember what his folk have been.'

'And we what we now are,' said the Master, with suppressed bitterness of feeling. 'But reach me my cloak, Caleb, and I will indulge Bucklaw with a sight of this chase. It is selfish to sacrifice my guest's pleasure to my own.'

'Sacrifice!' echoed Caleb, in a tone which seemed to imply the total absurdity of his master making the least concession in deference to any one — 'sacrifice, indeed! — but I crave your honour's pardon, and whilk doublet is it your pleasure to wear?'

'Any one you will, Caleb; my wardrobe, I suppose, is not very extensive.'

'Not extensive!' echoed his assistant; 'when there is the grey and silver that your lordship bestowed on Hew Hildebrand, your outrider; and the French velvet that went with my lord your father — be gracious to him! — my lord your father's auld wardrobe to the pair friends of the family; and the *drap-de-Berry* —'

'Which I gave to you, Caleb, and which, I suppose, is the only dress we have any chance to come at, except that I wore yesterday; pray, hand me that, and say no more about it.'

'If your honour has a fancy,' replied Caleb, 'and doubtless it's a sad-coloured suit, and you are in mourning; nevertheless, I have never tried on the *drap-de-Berry* — ill wad it became me — and your honour having no change of claiaths at this present — and it's weel brushed, and as there are leddies down yonder —'

'Ladies!' said Ravenswood; 'and what ladies, pray?'

'What do I ken, your lordship? Looking down at them from the Warden's Tower, I could but see them glent by wi' their bridles ringing and their feathers fluttering, like the court of Elfland.'

'Well, well, Caleb,' replied the Master, 'help me on with my cloak, and hand me my sword-belt. What clatter is that in the courtyard?'

'Just Bucklaw bringing out the horses,' said Caleb, after a glance through the window, 'as if there weren't men enough in the castle, or as if I couldn't serve the turn o' any o' them that are out o' the gate.'

'Alas! Caleb, we should want little if your ability were equal to your will,' replied his master.

'And I hope your lordship disna want that muckle,' said Caleb; 'for, considering a' things, I trust we support the credit of the family as weel as things will permit of, — only Bucklaw is aye sae frank and sae forward. And there he has brought out your lordship's palfrey, without the saddle being decorated wi' the brodered sumpter-cloth! and I could have brushed it in a minute.'

'It is all very well,' said his master, escaping from him and descending the narrow and steep winding staircase which led to the courtyard.

'It *may* be a' very weel,' said Caleb, somewhat peevishly; 'but if your lordship wad tarry a bit, I will tell you what will *not* be very weel.'

'And what is that?' said Ravenswood, impatiently, but stopping at the same time.

'Why, just that ye suld speer ony gentleman hame to dinner; for I canna mak anither fast on a feast day, as when I cam ower Bucklaw wi' Queen Margaret; and, to speak truth, if your lordship wad but please to cast yoursell in the way of dining wi' Lord Bittlebrains, I'se warrand I wad cast about brawly for the morn; or if, stead o' that, ye wad but dine wi' them at the change-house, ye might mak your shift for the lawing: ye might say ye had forgot your purse, or that the carline awed ye rent, and that ye wad allow it in the settlement.'

'Or any other lie that came uppermost, I suppose?' said his master. 'Good-bye, Caleb; I commend your care for the honour of the family.' And, throwing himself on his horse, he followed Bucklaw, who, at the manifest risk of his neck, had begun to gallop down the steep path which led from the Tower as soon as he saw Ravenswood have his foot in the stirrup.

Caleb Balderstone looked anxiously after them, and shook his thin grey locks — 'And I trust they will come to no evil;

but they have reached the plain, and folk cannot say but that the horse are hearty and in spirits.'

Animated by the natural impetuosity and fire of his temper, young Bucklaw rushed on with the careless speed of a whirlwind. Ravenswood was scarce more moderate in his pace, for his was a mind unwillingly roused from contemplative inactivity, but which, when once put into motion, acquired a spirit of forcible and violent progression. Neither was his eagerness proportioned in all cases to the motive of impulse, but might be compared to the speed of a stone, which rushes with like fury down the hill whether it was first put in motion by the arm of a giant or the hand of a boy. He felt, therefore, in no ordinary degree, the headlong impulse of the chase, a pastime so natural to youth of all ranks, that it seems rather to be an inherent passion in our animal nature, which levels all differences of rank and education, than an acquired habit of rapid exercise.

The repeated bursts of the French horn, which was then always used for the encouragement and direction of the hounds; the deep, though distant baying of the pack; the half-heard cries of the huntsmen; the half-seen forms which were discovered, now emerging from glens which crossed the moor, now sweeping over its surface, now picking their way where it was impeded by morasses; and, above all, the feeling of his own rapid motion, animated the Master of Ravenswood, at least for the moment, above the recollections of a more painful nature by which he was surrounded. The first thing which recalled him to those unpleasing circumstances was feeling that his horse, notwithstanding all the advantages which he received from his rider's knowledge of the country, was unable to keep up with the chase. As he drew his bridle up with the bitter feeling that his poverty excluded him from the favourite recreation of his forefathers, and indeed their sole employment when not engaged in military pursuits, he was accosted by a well-mounted stranger, who, unobserved, had kept near him during the earlier part of his career.

'Your horse is blown,' said the man, with a complaisance seldom used in a hunting-field. 'Might I crave your honour to make use of mine?'

'Sir,' said Ravenswood, more surprised than pleased at such a proposal, 'I really do not know how I have merited such a favour at a stranger's hands.'

'Never ask a question about it, Master,' said Bucklaw, who,

with great unwillingness, had hitherto reined in his own gallant steed, not to outride his host and entertainer. 'Take the goods the gods provide you, as the great John Dryden says; or stay — here, my friend, lend me that horse; I see you have been puzzled to rein him up this half-hour. I'll take the devil out of him for you. Now, Master, do you ride mine, which will carry you like an eagle.'

And throwing the rein of his own horse to the Master of Ravenswood, he sprung upon that which the stranger resigned to him, and continued his career at full speed.

'Was ever so thoughtless a being!' said the Master; 'and you, my friend, how could you trust him with your horse?'

'The horse,' said the man, 'belongs to a person who will make your honour, or any of your honourable friends, most welcome to him, flesh and fell.'

'And the owner's name is ——?' asked Ravenswood.

'Your honour must excuse me, you will learn that from himself. If you please to take your friend's horse, and leave me your galloway, I will meet you after the fall of the stag, for I hear they are blowing him at bay.'

'I believe, my friend, it will be the best way to recover your good horse for you,' answered Ravenswood; and mounting the nag of his friend Bucklaw, he made all the haste in his power to the spot where the blast of the horn announced that the stag's career was nearly terminated.

These jovial sounds were intermixed with the huntsmen's shouts of 'Hyke a Talbot! Hyke a Teviot! now, boys, now!' and similar cheering halloos of the olden hunting-field, to which the impatient yelling of the hounds, now close on the object of their pursuit, gave a lively and unremitting chorus. The straggling riders began now to rally towards the scene of action, collecting from different points as to a common centre.

Bucklaw kept the start which he had gotten, and arrived first at the spot, where the stag, incapable of sustaining a more prolonged flight, had turned upon the hounds, and, in the hunter's phrase, was at bay. With his stately head bent down, his sides white with foam, his eyes strained betwixt rage and terror, the hunted animal had now in his turn become an object of intimidation to his pursuers. The hunters came up one by one, and watched an opportunity to assail him with some advantage, which, in such circumstances, can only be done with caution. The dogs stood aloof and bayed loudly intimating at once eagerness and fear, and each of the sports-



men seemed to expect that his comrade would take upon him the perilous task of assaulting and disabling the animal. The ground, which was a hollow in the common or moor, afforded little advantage for approaching the stag unobserved; and general was the shout of triumph when Bucklaw, with the dexterity proper to an accomplished cavalier of the day, sprang from his horse, and dashing suddenly and swiftly at the stag, brought him to the ground by a cut on the hind leg with his short hunting-sword. The pack, rushing in upon their disabled enemy, soon ended his painful struggles, and solemnised his fall with their clamour; the hunters, with their horns and voices, whooping and blowing a *mort*, or death-note, which resounded far over the billows of the adjacent ocean.

The huntsman then withdrew the hounds from the throttled stag, and on his knee presented his knife to a fair female form, on a white palfrey, whose terror, or perhaps her compassion, had till then kept her at some distance. She wore a black silk riding-mask, which was then a common fashion, as well for preserving the complexion from sun and rain, as from an idea of decorum, which did not permit a lady to appear barefaced while engaged in a boisterous sport, and attended by a promiscuous company. The richness of her dress, however, as well as the mettle and form of her palfrey, together with the silvan compliment paid to her by the huntsman, pointed her out to Bucklaw as the principal person in the field. It was not without a feeling of pity, approaching even to contempt, that this enthusiastic hunter observed her refuse the huntsman's knife, presented to her for the purpose of making the first incision in the stag's breast, and thereby discovering the quality of the venison. He felt more than half inclined to pay his compliments to her; but it had been Bucklaw's misfortune, that his habits of life had not rendered him familiarly acquainted with the higher and better classes of female society, so that, with all his natural audacity, he felt sheepish and bashful when it became necessary to address a lady of distinction.

Taking unto himself heart of grace (to use his own phrase), he did at length summon up resolution enough to give the fare huntress good time of the day, and trust that her sport had answered her expectation. Her answer was very courteously and modestly expressed, and testified some gratitude to the gallant cavalier, whose exploit had terminated the chase so adroitly, when the hounds and huntsmen seemed somewhat at a stand.

'Uds daggers and scabbard, madam,' said Bucklaw, whom this observation brought at once upon his own ground, 'there is no difficulty or merit in that matter at all, so that a fellow is not too much afraid of having a pair of antlers in his guts. I have hunted at force five hundred times, madam; and I never yet saw the stag at bay, by land or water, but I durst have gone roundly in on him. It is all use and wont, madam; and I'll tell you, madam, for all that, it must be done with good heed and caution; and you will do well, madam, to have your hunting-sword both right sharp and double-edged, that you may strike either fore-handed or back-handed, as you see reason, for a hurt with a buck's horn is a perilous and somewhat venomous matter.'

'I am afraid, sir,' said the young lady, and her smile was scarce concealed by her vizard, 'I shall have little use for such careful preparation.'

'But the gentleman says very right for all that, my lady,' said an old huntsman, who had listened to Bucklaw's harangue with no small edification; 'and I have heard my father say, who was a forester at the Cabrach, that a wild boar's gaunch is more easily healed than a hurt from the deer's horn, for so says the old woodman's rhyme —

If thou be hurt with horn of hart, it brings thee to thy bier;  
But tusk of boar shall leeches heal, thereof have lesser fear.'

'An I might advise,' continued Bucklaw, who was now in his element, and desirous of assuming the whole management, 'as the hounds are surbated and weary, the head of the stag should be cabbaged in order to reward them; and if I may presume to speak, the huntsman, who is to break up the stag, ought to drink to your good ladyship's health a good lusty bicker of ale, or a tass of brandy; for if he breaks him up without drinking, the venison will not keep well.'

This very agreeable prescription received, as will be readily believed, all acceptance from the huntsman, who, in requital, offered to Bucklaw the compliment of his knife, which the young lady had declined.

This polite proffer was seconded by his mistress. 'I believe, sir,' she said, withdrawing herself from the circle, 'that my father, for whose amusement Lord Bittlebrains' hounds have been out to day, will readily surrender all care of these matters to a gentleman of your experience.'

Then, bending gracefully from her horse, she wished him

good morning, and, attended by one or two domestics, who seemed immediately attached to her service, retired from the scene of action, to which Bucklaw, too much delighted with an opportunity of displaying his woodcraft to care about man or woman either, paid little attention; but was soon stript to his doublet, with tucked-up sleeves, and naked arms up to the elbows in blood and grease, slashing, cutting, hacking, and hewing, with the precision of Sir Tristrem himself, and wrangling and disputing with all around him concerning nombles, briskets, flankards, and raven-bones, then usual terms of the art of hunting, or of butchery, whichever the reader chooses to call it, which are now probably antiquated.

When Ravenswood, who followed a short space behind his friend, saw that the stag had fallen, his temporary ardour for the chase gave way to that feeling of reluctance which he endured at encountering in his fallen fortunes the gaze whether of equals or inferiors. He reined up his horse on the top of a gentle eminence, from which he observed the busy and gay scene beneath him, and heard the whoops of the huntsmen, gaily mingled with the cry of the dogs, and the neighing and trampling of the horses. But these jovial sounds fell sadly on the ear of the ruined nobleman. The chase, with all its train of excitations, has ever since feudal times been accounted the almost exclusive privilege of the aristocracy, and was anciently their chief employment in times of peace. The sense that he was excluded by his situation from enjoying the silvan sport, which his rank assigned to him as a special prerogative, and the feeling that new men were now exercising it over the downs which had been jealously reserved by his ancestors for their own amusement, while he, the heir of the domain, was fain to hold himself at a distance from their party, awakened reflections calculated to depress deeply a mind like Ravenswood's, which was naturally contemplative and melancholy. His pride, however, soon shook off this feeling of dejection, and it gave way to impatience upon finding that his volatile friend Bucklaw seemed in no hurry to return with his borrowed steed, which Ravenswood, before leaving the field, wished to see restored to the obliging owner. As he was about to move towards the group of assembled huntsmen, he was joined by a horseman, who, like himself, had kept aloof during the fall of the deer.

This personage seemed stricken in years. He wore a scarlet cloak, buttoning high upon his face, and his hat was unlooped and slouched, probably by way of defence against the weather.

His horse, a strong and steady palfrey, was calculated for a rider who proposed to witness the sport of the day rather than to share it. An attendant waited at some distance, and the whole equipment was that of an elderly gentleman of rank and fashion. He accosted Ravenswood very politely, but not without some embarrassment.

‘You seem a gallant young gentleman, sir,’ he said, ‘and yet appear as indifferent to this brave sport as if you had my load of years on your shoulders.’

‘I have followed the sport with more spirit on other occasions,’ replied the Master; ‘at present, late events in my family must be my apology; and besides,’ he added, ‘I was but indifferently mounted at the beginning of the sport.’

‘I think,’ said the stranger, ‘one of my attendants had the sense to accommodate your friend with a horse.’

‘I was much indebted to his politeness and yours,’ replied Ravenswood. ‘My friend is Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw, whom I daresay you will be sure to find in the thick of the keenest sportsmen. He will return your servant’s horse, and take my pony in exchange; and will add,’ he concluded, turning his horse’s head from the stranger, ‘his best acknowledgments to mine for the accommodation.’

The Master of Ravenswood, having thus expressed himself, began to move homeward, with the manner of one who has taken leave of his company. But the stranger was not so to be shaken off. He turned his horse at the same time, and rode in the same direction, so near to the Master that, without outriding him, which the formal civility of the time, and the respect due to the stranger’s age and recent civility, would have rendered improper, he could not easily escape from his company.

The stranger did not long remain silent. ‘This, then,’ he said, ‘is the ancient Castle of Wolf’s Crag, often mentioned in the Scottish records,’ looking to the old tower, then darkening under the influence of a stormy cloud, that formed its background; for at the distance of a short mile, the chase, having been circuitous, had brought the hunters nearly back to the point which they had attained when Ravenswood and Bucklaw had set forward to join them.

Ravenswood answered this observation with a cold and distant assent.

‘It was, as I have heard,’ continued the stranger, unabashed by his coldness, ‘one of the most early possessions of the honourable family of Ravenswood.’

'Their earliest possession,' answered the Master, 'and probably their latest.'

'I — I — I should hope not, sir,' answered the stranger, clearing his voice with more than one cough, and making an effort to overcome a certain degree of hesitation; 'Scotland knows what she owes to this ancient family, and remembers their frequent and honourable achievements. I have little doubt that, were it properly represented to her Majesty that so ancient and noble a family were subjected to dilapidation — I mean to decay — means might be found, *ad re-ædificandum antiquam domum* ——'

'I will save you the trouble, sir, of discussing this point farther,' interrupted the Master, haughtily. 'I am the heir of that unfortunate house — I am the Master of Ravenswood. And you, sir, who seem to be a gentleman of fashion and education, must be sensible that the next mortification after being unhappy is the being loaded with undesired commiseration.'

'I beg your pardon, sir,' said the elder horseman; 'I did not know — I am sensible I ought not to have mentioned — nothing could be farther from my thoughts than to suppose ——'

'There are no apologies necessary, sir,' answered Ravenswood, 'for here, I suppose, our roads separate, and I assure you that we part in perfect equanimity on my side.'

As speaking these words, he directed his horse's head towards a narrow causeway, the ancient approach to Wolf's Crag, of which it might be truly said, in the words of the Bard of Hope, that

Frequented by few was the grass-cover'd road,  
Where the hunter of deer and the warrior trode,  
To his hills that encircle the sea.

But ere he could disengage himself from his companion, the young lady we have already mentioned came up to join the stranger, followed by her servants.

'Daughter,' said the stranger to the masked damsel, 'this is the Master of Ravenswood.'

It would have been natural that the gentleman should have replied to this introduction; but there was something in the graceful form and retiring modesty of the female to whom he was thus presented, which not only prevented him from inquiring to whom, and by whom, the annunciation had been made, but which even for the time struck him absolutely mute. At this moment the cloud which had long lowered above the height



on which Wolf's Crag is situated, and which now, as it advanced, spread itself in darker and denser folds both over land and sea, hiding the distant objects and obscuring those which were nearer, turning the sea to a leaden complexion and the heath to a darker brown, began now, by one or two distant peals, to announce the thunders with which it was fraught; while two flashes of lightning, following each other very closely, showed in the distance the grey turrets of Wolf's Crag, and, more nearly, the rolling billows of the ocean, crested suddenly with red and dazzling light.

The horse of the fair huntress showed symptoms of impatience and restiveness, and it became impossible for Ravenswood, as a man or a gentleman, to leave her abruptly to the care of an aged father or her menial attendants. He was, or believed himself, obliged in courtesy to take hold of her bridle, and assist her in managing the unruly animal. While he was thus engaged, the old gentleman observed that the storm seemed to increase; that they were far from Lord Bittlebrains', whose guests they were for the present; and that he would be obliged to the Master of Ravenswood to point him the way to the nearest place of refuge from the storm. At the same time he cast a wistful and embarrassed look towards the Tower of Wolf's Crag, which seemed to render it almost impossible for the owner to avoid offering an old man and a lady, in such an emergency, the temporary use of his house. Indeed, the condition of the young huntress made this courtesy indispensable; for, in the course of the services which he rendered, he could not but perceive that she trembled much, and was extremely agitated, from her apprehensions, doubtless, of the coming storm.

I know not if the Master of Ravenswood shared her terrors, but he was not entirely free from something like a similar disorder of nerves, as he observed, 'The Tower of Wolf's Crag has nothing to offer beyond the shelter of its roof, but if that can be acceptable at such a moment——' he paused, as if the rest of the invitation stuck in his throat. But the old gentleman, his self-constituted companion, did not allow him to recede from the invitation, which he had rather suffered to be implied than directly expressed.

'The storm,' said the stranger, 'must be an apology for waiving ceremony; his daughter's health was weak, she had suffered much from a recent alarm; he trusted their intrusion on the Master of Ravenswood's hospitality would not be alto-

gether unpardonable in the circumstances of the case : his child's safety must be dearer to him than ceremony.'

There was no room to retreat. The Master of Ravenswood led the way, continuing to keep hold of the lady's bridle to prevent her horse from starting at some unexpected explosion of thunder. He was not so bewildered in his own hurried reflections but that he remarked, that the deadly paleness which had occupied her neck and temples, and such of her features as the riding-mask left exposed, gave place to a deep and rosy suffusion ; and he felt with embarrassment that a flush was by tacit sympathy excited in his own cheeks. The stranger, with watchfulness which he disguised under apprehensions for the safety of his daughter, continued to observe the expression of the Master's countenance as they ascended the hill to Wolf's Crag. When they stood in front of that ancient fortress, Ravenswood's emotions were of a very complicated description ; and as he led the way into the rude courtyard, and hallooed to Caleb to give attendance, there was a tone of sternness, almost of fierceness, which seemed somewhat alien from the courtesies of one who is receiving honoured guests.

Caleb came ; and not the paleness of the fair stranger at the first approach of the thunder, nor the paleness of any other person, in any other circumstances whatever, equalled that which overcame the thin cheeks of the disconsolate seneschal when he beheld this accession of guests to the castle, and reflected that the dinner hour was fast approaching. 'Is he daft ?' he muttered to himself — 'is he clean daft a'thegither, to bring lords and leddies, and a host of folk behint them, and twal o'clock chappit ?' Then approaching the Master, he craved pardon for having permitted the rest of his people to go out to see the hunt, observing, that 'They wad never think of his lordship coming back till mirk night, and that he dreaded they might play the truant.'

'Silence, Balderstone !' said Ravenswood, sternly ; 'your folly is unseasonable. Sir and madam,' he said, turning to his guests, 'this old man, and a yet older and more imbecile female domestic, form my whole retinue. Our means of refreshing you are more scanty than even so miserable a retinue, and a dwelling so dilapidated, might seem to promise you ; but, such as they may chance to be, you may command them.'

The elder stranger, struck with the ruined and even savage appearance of the Tower, rendered still more disconsolate by the lowering and gloomy sky, and perhaps not altogether un-

moved by the grave and determined voice in which their host addressed them, looked round him anxiously, as if he half repented the readiness with which he had accepted the offered hospitality. But there was now no opportunity of receding from the situation in which he had placed himself.

As for Caleb, he was so utterly stunned by his master's public and unqualified acknowledgment of the nakedness of the land, that for two minutes he could only mutter within his hebdomadal beard, which had not felt the razor for six days, 'He's daft — clean daft — red wud, and awa' wi't! But deil hae Caleb Balderstone,' said he, collecting his powers of invention and resource, 'if the family shall lose credit, if he were as mad as the seven wise masters!' He then boldly advanced, and in spite of his master's frowns and impatience, gravely asked, 'If he should not serve up some slight refection for the young leddy, and a glass of tokay, or old sack — or ——'

'Truce to this ill-timed foolery,' said the Master, sternly; 'put the horses into the stable, and interrupt us no more with your absurdities.'

'Your honour's pleasure is to be obeyed aboon a' things,' said Caleb; 'nevertheless, as for the sack and tokay which it is not your noble guests' pleasure to accept ——'

But here the voice of Bucklaw, heard even above the clattering of hoofs and braying of horns with which it mingled, announced that he was scaling the pathway to the Tower at the head of the greater part of the gallant hunting train.

'The deil be in me,' said Caleb, taking heart in spite of this new invasion of Philistines, 'if they shall beat me yet! The hellicat ne'er-do-weel! to bring such a crew here, that will expect to find brandy as plenty as ditch-water, and he kenning sae absolutely the case in whilk we stand for the present! But I trow, could I get rid of thae gaping gowks of flunkies that hae won into the courtyard at the back of their betters, as mony a man gets preferment, I could make a' right yet.'

The measures which he took to execute this dauntless resolution, the reader shall learn in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER X

With throat unslaked, with black lips baked,  
Agape they heard him call ;  
Gramercy they for joy did grin,  
And all at once their breath drew in,  
As they had been drinking all !

COLERIDGE'S *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.

**H**AYSTON of Bucklaw was one of the thoughtless class who never hesitate between their friend and their jest. When it was announced that the principal persons of the chase had taken their route towards Wolf's Crag, the huntsmen, as a point of civility, offered to transfer the venison to that mansion ; a proffer which was readily accepted by Bucklaw, who thought much of the astonishment which their arrival in full body would occasion poor old Caleb Balderstone, and very little of the dilemma to which he was about to expose his friend the Master, so ill circumstanced to receive such a party. But in old Caleb he had to do with a crafty and alert antagonist, prompt at supplying, upon all emergencies, evasions and excuses suitable, as he thought, to the dignity of the family.

'Praise be blest !' said Caleb to himself, 'ae leaf of the muckle gate has been swung to wi' yestreen's wind, and I think I can manage to shut the ither.'

But he was desirous, like a prudent governor, at the same time to get rid, if possible, of the internal enemy, in which light he considered almost every one who eat and drank, ere he took measures to exclude those whom their jocund noise now pronounced to be near at hand. He waited, therefore, with impatience until his master had shown his two principal guests into the Tower, and then commenced his operations.

'I think,' he said to the stranger menials, 'that, as they are bringing the stag's head to the castle in all honour, we, who are indwellers, should receive them at the gate.'

The unwary grooms had no sooner hurried out, in com-

pliance with this insidious hint, than, one folding-door of the ancient gate being already closed by the wind, as has been already intimated, honest Caleb lost no time in shutting the other with a clang, which resounded from donjon-vault to battlement. Having thus secured the pass, he forthwith indulged the excluded huntsmen in brief parley, from a small projecting window, or shot-hole, through which, in former days, the warders were wont to reconnoitre those who presented themselves before the gates. He gave them to understand, in a short and pithy speech, that the gate of the castle was never on any account opened during meal-times ;<sup>1</sup> that his honour, the Master of Ravenswood, and some guests of quality, had just sat down to dinner ; that there was excellent brandy at the hostler-wife's at Wolf's Hope down below ; and he held out some obscure hint that the reckoning would be discharged by the Master ; but this was uttered in a very dubious and oracular strain, for, like Louis XIV., Caleb Balderstone hesitated to carry *finesse* so far as direct falsehood, and was content to deceive, if possible, without directly lying.

This annunciation was received with surprise by some, with laughter by others, and with dismay by the expelled lackeys, who endeavoured to demonstrate that their right of readmission, for the purpose of waiting upon their master and mistress, was at least indisputable. But Caleb was not in a humour to understand or admit any distinctions. He stuck to his original proposition with that dogged but convenient pertinacity which is armed against all conviction, and deaf to all reasoning. Bucklaw now came from the rear of the party, and demanded admittance in a very angry tone. But the resolution of Caleb was immovable.

'If the king on the throne were at the gate,' he declared, 'his ten fingers should never open it contrair to the established use and wont of the family of Ravenswood, and his duty as their head-servant.'

Bucklaw was now extremely incensed, and with more oaths and curses than we care to repeat, declared himself most unworthily treated, and demanded peremptorily to speak with the Master of Ravenswood himself.

But to this also Caleb turned a deaf ear. 'He's as soon a-bleeze as a tap of tow, the lad Bucklaw,' he said ; 'but the deil of ony master's face he shall see till he has sleepit and waken'd on't. He'll ken himsell better the morn's morning. It sets the like o' him, to be bringing a crew of drunken

<sup>1</sup> [See *Old Mortality*, Note 12, p. 416.]



hunters here, when he kens there is but little preparation to sloken his ain drought.' And he disappeared from the window, leaving them all to digest their exclusion as they best might.

But another person, of whose presence Caleb, in the animation of the debate, was not aware, had listened in silence to its progress. This was the principal domestic of the stranger—a man of trust and consequence—the same who, in the hunting-field, had accommodated Bucklaw with the use of his horse. He was in the stable when Caleb had contrived the expulsion of his fellow-servants, and thus avoided sharing the same fate, from which his personal importance would certainly not have otherwise saved him.

This personage perceived the manœuvre of Caleb, easily appreciated the motive of his conduct, and knowing his master's intentions towards the family of Ravenswood, had no difficulty as to the line of conduct he ought to adopt. He took the place of Caleb (unperceived by the latter) at the post of audience which he had just left, and announced to the assembled domestics, 'That it was his master's pleasure that Lord Bittle-brains' retinue and his own should go down to the adjacent change-house and call for what refreshments they might have occasion for, and he should take care to discharge the lawing.'

The jolly troop of huntsmen retired from the inhospitable gate of Wolf's Crag, execrating, as they descended the steep pathway, the niggard and unworthy disposition of the proprietor, and damning, with more than silvan license, both the castle and its inhabitants. Bucklaw, with many qualities which would have made him a man of worth and judgment in more favourable circumstances, had been so utterly neglected in point of education, that he was apt to think and feel according to the ideas of the companions of his pleasures. The praises which had recently been heaped upon himself he contrasted with the general abuse now levelled against Ravenswood; he recalled to his mind the dull and monotonous days he had spent in the Tower of Wolf's Crag, compared with the joviality of his usual life; he felt with great indignation his exclusion from the castle, which he considered as a gross affront, and every mingled feeling led him to break off the union which he had formed with the Master of Ravenswood.

On arriving at the change-house of the village of Wolf's Hope, he unexpectedly met with an old acquaintance just alighting from his horse. This was no other than the very respectable Captain Craigenfelt, who immediately came up to

him, and, without appearing to retain any recollection of the indifferent terms on which they had parted, shook him by the hand in the warmest manner possible. A warm grasp of the hand was what Bucklaw could never help returning with cordiality, and no sooner had Craigenfelt felt the pressure of his fingers than he knew the terms on which he stood with him.

'Long life to you, Bucklaw!' he exclaimed; 'there's life for honest folk in this bad world yet!'

The Jacobites at this period, with what propriety I know not, used, it must be noticed, the term of *honest men* as peculiarly descriptive of their own party.

'Ay, and for others besides, it seems,' answered Bucklaw; 'otherways, how came you to venture hither, noble Captain?'

'Who — I? I am as free as the wind at Martinmas, that pays neither land-rent nor annual; all is explained — all settled with the honest old drivellers yonder of Auld Reekie. Pooh! pooh! they dared not keep me a week of days in durance. A certain person has better friends among them than you wot of, and can serve a friend when it is least likely.'

'Pshaw!' answered Hayston, who perfectly knew and thoroughly despised the character of this man, 'none of your cogging gibberish; tell me truly, are you at liberty and in safety?'

'Free and safe as a Whig bailie on the causeway of his own borough, or a canting Presbyterian minister in his own pulpit; and I came to tell you that you need not remain in hiding any longer.'

'Then I suppose you call yourself my friend, Captain Craigenfelt?' said Bucklaw.

'Friend!' replied Craigenfelt, 'my cock of the pit! why, I am thy very Achates, man, as I have heard scholars say — hand and glove — bark and tree — thine to life and death!'

'I'll try that in a moment,' answered Bucklaw. 'Thou art never without money, however thou comest by it. Lend me two pieces to wash the dust out of these honest fellows' throats in the first place, and then ——'

'Two pieces! Twenty are at thy service, my lad, and twenty to back them.'

'Ay, say you so?' said Bucklaw, pausing, for his natural penetration led him to suspect some extraordinary motive lay couched under such an excess of generosity. 'Craigenfelt, you are either an honest fellow in right good earnest, and I scarce

know how to believe that ; or you are cleverer than I took you for, and I scarce know how to believe that either.'

'*L'un n'empêche pas l'autre*,' said Craigengelt. 'Touch and try ; the gold is good as ever was weighed.'

He put a quantity of gold pieces into Bucklaw's hand, which he thrust into his pocket without either counting or looking at them, only observing, 'That he was so circumstanced that he must enlist, though the devil offered the press-money' ; and then turning to the huntsmen, he called out, 'Come along, my lads ; all is at my cost.'

'Long life to Bucklaw !' shouted the men of the chase.

'And confusion to him that takes his share of the sport, and leaves the hunters as dry as a drumhead,' added another, by way of corollary.

'The house of Ravenswood was ance a gude and an honourable house in this land,' said an old man ; 'but it's lost its credit this day, and the Master has shown himself no better than a greedy cullion.'

And with this conclusion, which was unanimously agreed to by all who heard it, they rushed tumultuously into the house of entertainment, where they revelled till a late hour. The jovial temper of Bucklaw seldom permitted him to be nice in the choice of his associates ; and on the present occasion, when his joyous debauch received additional zest from the intervention of an unusual space of sobriety, and almost abstinence, he was as happy in leading the revels as if his comrades had been sons of princes. Craigengelt had his own purposes in fooling him up to the top of his bent ; and having some low humour, much impudence, and the power of singing a good song, understanding besides thoroughly the disposition of his regained associate, he readily succeeded in involving him bumper-deep in the festivity of the meeting.

A very different scene was in the meantime passing in the Tower of Wolf's Crag. When the Master of Ravenswood left the courtyard, too much busied with his own perplexed reflections to pay attention to the manœuvre of Caleb, he ushered his guests into the great hall of the castle.

The indefatigable Balderstone, who, from choice or habit, worked on from morning to night, had by degrees cleared this desolate apartment of the confused relics of the funeral banquet, and restored it to some order. But not all his skill and labour, in disposing to advantage the little furniture which remained,

could remove the dark and disconsolate appearance of those ancient and disfurnished walls. The narrow windows, flanked by deep indentures into the wall, seemed formed rather to exclude than to admit the cheerful light; and the heavy and gloomy appearance of the thunder-sky added still farther to the obscurity.

As Ravenswood, with the grace of a gallant of that period, but not without a certain stiffness and embarrassment of manner, handed the young lady to the upper end of the apartment, her father remained standing more near to the door, as if about to disengage himself from his hat and cloak. At this moment the clang of the portal was heard, a sound at which the stranger started, stepped hastily to the window, and looked with an air of alarm at Ravenswood, when he saw that the gate of the court was shut, and his domestics excluded.

‘You have nothing to fear, sir,’ said Ravenswood, gravely; ‘this roof retains the means of giving protection, though not welcome. Methinks,’ he added, ‘it is time that I should know who they are that have thus highly honoured my ruined dwelling!’

The young lady remained silent and motionless, and the father, to whom the question was more directly addressed, seemed in the situation of a performer who has ventured to take upon himself a part which he finds himself unable to present, and who comes to a pause when it is most to be expected that he should speak. While he endeavoured to cover his embarrassment with the exterior ceremonials of a well-bred demeanour, it was obvious that, in making his bow, one foot shuffled forward, as if to advance, the other backward, as if with the purpose of escape; and as he undid the cape of his coat, and raised his beaver from his face, his fingers fumbled as if the one had been linked with rusted iron, or the other had weighed equal with a stone of lead. The darkness of the sky seemed to increase, as if to supply the want of those mufflings which he laid aside with such evident reluctance. The impatience of Ravenswood increased also in proportion to the delay of the stranger, and he appeared to struggle under agitation, though probably from a very different cause. He laboured to restrain his desire to speak while the stranger, to all appearance, was at a loss for words to express what he felt it necessary to say.

At length Ravenswood’s impatience broke the bonds he had imposed upon it. ‘I perceive,’ he said, ‘that Sir William Ashton is unwilling to announce himself in the Castle of Wolf’s Crag.’

‘I had hoped it was unnecessary,’ said the Lord Keeper, relieved from his silence, as a spectre by the voice of the exorcist; ‘and I am obliged to you, Master of Ravenswood, for breaking the ice at once, where circumstances — unhappy circumstances, let me call them — rendered self-introduction peculiarly awkward.’

‘And I am not then,’ said the Master of Ravenswood, gravely, ‘to consider the honour of this visit as purely accidental?’

‘Let us distinguish a little,’ said the Keeper, assuming an appearance of ease which perhaps his heart was a stranger to; ‘this is an honour which I have eagerly desired for some time, but which I might never have obtained, save for the accident of the storm. My daughter and I are alike grateful for this opportunity of thanking the brave man to whom she owes her life and I mine.’

The hatred which divided the great families in the feudal times had lost little of its bitterness, though it no longer expressed itself in deeds of open violence. Not the feelings which Ravenswood had begun to entertain towards Lucy Ashton, not the hospitality due to his guests, were able entirely to subdue, though they warmly combated, the deep passions which arose within him at beholding his father’s foe standing in the hall of the family of which he had in a great measure accelerated the ruin. His looks glanced from the father to the daughter with an irresolution of which Sir William Ashton did not think it proper to await the conclusion. He had now disembarrassed himself of his riding-dress, and walking up to his daughter, he undid the fastening of her mask.

‘Lucy, my love,’ he said, raising her and leading her towards Ravenswood, ‘lay aside your mask, and let us express our gratitude to the Master openly and barefaced.’

‘If he will condescend to accept it,’ was all that Lucy uttered; but in a tone so sweetly modulated, and which seemed to imply at once a feeling and a forgiving of the cold reception to which they were exposed, that, coming from a creature so innocent and so beautiful, her words cut Ravenswood to the very heart for his harshness. He muttered something of surprise, something of confusion, and, ending with a warm and eager expression of his happiness at being able to afford her shelter under his roof, he saluted her, as the ceremonial of the time enjoined upon such occasions. Their cheeks had touched and were withdrawn from each other; Ravenswood had not quitted the hand which he had taken in kindly courtesy; a



## CHAPTER XI

Let them have meat enough, woman — half a hen ;  
There be old rotten pilchards — put them off too ;  
'Tis but a little new anointing of them,  
And a strong onion, that confounds the savour.

*Love's Pilgrimage.*

THE thunderbolt, which had stunned all who were within hearing of it, had only served to awaken the bold and inventive genius of the flower of majors-domo. Almost before the clatter had ceased, and while there was yet scarce an assurance whether the castle was standing or falling, Caleb exclaimed, 'Heavens be praised ! this comes to hand like the bowl of a pint-stoup.' He then barred the kitchen door in the face of the Lord Keeper's servant, whom he perceived returning from the party at the gate, and muttering, 'How the deil cam he in ? — but deil may care. Mysie, what are ye sitting shaking and greeting in the chimney-neuk for ? Come here — or stay where ye are, and skirl as loud as ye can ; it's a' ye're gude for. I say, ye auld deevil, skirl — skirl — louder — louder, woman ; gar the gentles hear ye in the ha'. I have heard ye as far off as the Bass for a less matter. And stay — down wi' that crockery ——'

And with a sweeping blow, he threw down from a shelf some articles of pewter and earthenware. He exalted his voice amid the clatter, shouting and roaring in a manner which changed Mysie's hysterical terrors of the thunder into fears that her old fellow-servant was gone distracted. 'He has dung down a' the bits o' pigs, too — the only thing we had left to haud a soup milk — and he has spilt the hatted kit that was for the Master's dinner. Mercy save us, the auld man's gaen clean and clear wud wi' the thunner !'

'Haud your tongue, ye b—— !' said Caleb, in the impetuous and overbearing triumph of successful invention, 'a's provided now — dinner and a' thing ; the thunner's done a' in a clap of a hand !'



WITH A SWEEPING BLOW HE THREW DOWN SOME PEWTER AND EARTHENWARE.  
From a painting by Hay.



‘Puir man, he’s muckle astray,’ said Mysie, looking at him with a mixture of pity and alarm; ‘I wish he may ever come hame to himsell again.’

‘Here, ye auld doited deevil,’ said Caleb, still exulting in his extrication from a dilemma which had seemed insurmountable; ‘keep the strange man out of the kitchen; swear the thunner came down the chimney and spoiled the best dinner ye ever dressed — beef — bacon — kid — lark — leveret — wild-fowl — venison, and what not. Lay it on thick, and never mind expenses. I’ll awa’ up to the ha’. Make a’ the confusion ye can, but be sure ye keep out the strange servant.’

With these charges to his ally, Caleb posted up to the hall, but stopping to reconnoitre through an aperture, which time, for the convenience of many a domestic in succession, had made in the door, and perceiving the situation of Miss Ashton, he had prudence enough to make a pause, both to avoid adding to her alarm and in order to secure attention to his account of the disastrous effects of the thunder.

But when he perceived that the lady was recovered, and heard the conversation turn upon the accommodation and refreshment which the castle afforded, he thought it time to burst into the room in the manner announced in the last chapter.

‘Wull a wins! Such a misfortune to befa’ the house of Ravenswood, and I to live to see it.’

‘What is the matter, Caleb?’ said his master, somewhat alarmed in his turn; ‘has any part of the castle fallen?’

‘Castle fa’an! na, but the sute’s fa’an, and the thunner’s come right down the kitchen-lum, and the things are a’ lying here awa’, there awa’, like the Laird o’ Hotchpotch’s lands; and wi’ brave guests of honour and quality to entertain (a low bow here to Sir William Ashton and his daughter), and nae-thing left in the house fit to present for dinner, or for supper either, for aught that I can see!’

‘I verily believe you, Caleb,’ said Ravenswood, drily.

Balderstone here turned to his master a half-upbraiding, half-imploing countenance, and edged towards him as he repeated, ‘It was nae great matter of preparation; but just something added to your honour’s ordinary course of fare — *petty cover*, as they say at the Louvre — three courses and the fruit.’

‘Keep your intolerable nonsense to yourself, you old fool!’ said Ravenswood, mortified at his officiousness, yet not knowing

how to contradict him, without the risk of giving rise to scenes yet more ridiculous.

Caleb saw his advantage, and resolved to improve it. But first, observing that the Lord Keeper's servant entered the apartment and spoke apart with his master, he took the same opportunity to whisper a few words into Ravenswood's ear — 'Haud your tongue, for heaven's sake, sir; if it's my pleasure to hazard my soul in telling lees for the honour of the family, it's nae business o' yours; and if ye let me gang on quietly, I'se be moderate in my banquet; but if ye contradict me, deil but I dress ye a dinner fit for a duke!'

Ravenswood, in fact, thought it would be best to let his officious butler run on, who proceeded to enumerate upon his fingers — 'No muckle provision — might hae served four persons of honour, — first course, capons in white broth — roast kid — bacon with reverence; second course, roasted leveret — butter crabs — a veal florentine; third course, blackcock — it's black enough now wi' the sute — plumdamas — a tart — a flam — and some nonsense sweet things, and comfits — and that's a,' he said, seeing the impatience of his master — 'that's just a' was o't — forbye the apples and pears.'

Miss Ashton had by degrees gathered her spirits, so far as to pay some attention to what was going on; and observing the restrained impatience of Ravenswood, contrasted with the peculiar determination of manner with which Caleb detailed his imaginary banquet, the whole struck her as so ridiculous that, despite every effort to the contrary, she burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter, in which she was joined by her father, though with more moderation, and finally by the Master of Ravenswood himself, though conscious that the jest was at his own expense. Their mirth — for a scene which we read with little emotion often appears extremely ludicrous to the spectators — made the old vault ring again. They ceased — they renewed — they ceased — they renewed again their shouts of laughter! Caleb, in the meantime, stood his ground with a grave, angry, and scornful dignity, which greatly enhanced the ridicule of the scene and the mirth of the spectators.

At length, when the voices, and nearly the strength, of the laughs were exhausted, he exclaimed, with very little ceremony, 'The deil's in the gentles! they breakfast sae lordly, that the loss of the best dinner ever cook pat fingers to makes them as merry as if it were the best jeest in a' George Buchanan.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See George Buchanan's Jests. Note 4.



If there was as little in your honours' wames as there is in Caleb Balderstone's, less caickling wad serve ye on sic a gravaminous subject.'

Caleb's blunt expression of resentment again awakened the mirth of the company, which, by the way, he regarded not only as an aggression upon the dignity of the family, but a special contempt of the eloquence with which he himself had summed up the extent of their supposed losses. 'A description of a dinner,' as he said afterwards to Mysie, 'that wad hae made a fu' man hungry, and them to sit there laughing at it!'

'But,' said Miss Ashton, composing her countenance as well as she could, 'are all these delicacies so totally destroyed that no scrap can be collected?'

'Collected, my leddy! what wad ye collect out of the sute and the ass? Ye may gang down yoursell, and look into our kitchen — the cookmaid in the trembling exies — the gude vivers lying a' about — beef, capons, and white broth — florentine and flams — bacon wi' reverence — and a' the sweet confections and whim-whams — ye'll see them a', my leddy — that is,' said he, correcting himself, 'ye'll no see ony of them now, for the cook has soopit them up, as was weel her part; but ye'll see the white broth where it was spilt. I pat my fingers in it, and it tastes as like sour milk as ony thing else; if that isna the effect of thunner, I kenna what is. This gentleman here couldna but hear the clash of our haille dishes, china and silver thegither?'

The Lord Keeper's domestic, though a statesman's attendant, and of course trained to command his countenance upon all occasions, was somewhat discomposed by this appeal, to which he only answered by a bow.

'I think, Mr. Butler,' said the Lord Keeper, who began to be afraid lest the prolongation of this scene should at length displease Ravenswood — 'I think that, were you to retire with my servant Lockhard — he has travelled, and is quite accustomed to accidents and contingencies of every kind, and I hope betwixt you, you may find out some mode of supply at this emergency.'

'His honour kens,' said Caleb, who, however hopeless of himself of accomplishing what was desirable, would, like the high-spirited elephant, rather have died in the effort than brooked the aid of a brother in commission — 'his honour kens weel I need nae counsellor, when the honour of the house is concerned.'

'I should be unjust if I denied it, Caleb,' said his master; 'but your art lies chiefly in making apologies, upon which we

can no more dine than upon the bill of fare of our thunder-blasted dinner. Now, possibly Mr. Lockhard's talent may consist in finding some substitute for that which certainly is not, and has in all probability never been.'

'Your honour is pleased to be facetious,' said Caleb, 'but I am sure that, for the warst, for a walk as far as Wolf's Hope, I could dine forty men — no that the folk there deserve your honour's custom. They hae been ill advised in the matter of the duty eggs and butter, I winna deny that.'

'Do go consult together,' said the Master; 'go down to the village, and do the best you can. We must not let our guests remain without refreshment, to save the honour of a ruined family. And here, Caleb, take my purse; I believe that will prove your best ally.'

'Purse! purse, indeed!' quoth Caleb, indignantly flinging out of the room; 'what suld I do wi' your honour's purse, on your ain grund? I trust we are no to pay for our ain?'

The servants left the hall; and the door was no sooner shut than the Lord Keeper began to apologise for the rudeness of his mirth; and Lucy to hope she had given no pain or offence to the kind-hearted faithful old man.

'Caleb and I must both learn, madam, to undergo with good humour, or at least with patience, the ridicule which everywhere attaches itself to poverty.'

'You do yourself injustice, Master of Ravenswood, on my word of honour,' answered his elder guest. 'I believe I know more of your affairs than you do yourself, and I hope to show you that I am interested in them; and that — in short, that your prospects are better than you apprehend. In the meantime, I can conceive nothing so respectable as the spirit which rises above misfortune, and prefers honourable privations to debt or dependence.'

Whether from fear of offending the delicacy or awakening the pride of the Master, the Lord Keeper made these allusions with an appearance of fearful and hesitating reserve, and seemed to be afraid that he was intruding too far, in venturing to touch, however lightly, upon such a topic, even when the Master had led to it. In short, he appeared at once pushed on by his desire of appearing friendly, and held back by the fear of intrusion. It was no wonder that the Master of Ravenswood, little acquainted as he then was with life, should have given this consummate courtier credit for more sincerity than was probably to be found in a score of his cast. He answered,

however, with reserve, that he was indebted to all who might think well of him ; and, apologising to his guests, he left the hall, in order to make such arrangements for their entertainment as circumstances admitted.

Upon consulting with old Mysie, the accommodations for the night were easily completed, as indeed they admitted of little choice. The Master surrendered his apartment for the use of Miss Ashton, and Mysie, once a person of consequence, dressed in a black satin gown which had belonged of yore to the Master's grandmother, and had figured in the court-balls of Henrietta Maria, went to attend her as lady's-maid. He next inquired after Bucklaw, and understanding he was at the change-house with the huntsmen and some companions, he desired Caleb to call there, and acquaint him how he was circumstanced at Wolf's Crag ; to intimate to him that it would be most convenient if he could find a bed in the hamlet, as the elder guest must necessarily be quartered in the secret chamber, the only spare bedroom which could be made fit to receive him. The Master saw no hardship in passing the night by the hall fire, wrapt in his campaign-cloak ; and to Scottish domestics of the day, even of the highest rank, nay, to young men of family or fashion, on any pinch, clean straw, or a dry hay-loft, was always held good night-quarters.

For the rest, Lockhard had his master's orders to bring some venison from the inn, and Caleb was to trust to his wits for the honour of his family. The Master, indeed, a second time held out his purse ; but, as it was in sight of the strange servant, the butler thought himself obliged to decline what his fingers itched to clutch. 'Couldna he hae slippit it gently into my hand ?' said Caleb ; 'but his honour will never learn how to bear himsell in siccan cases.'

Mysie, in the meantime, according to a uniform custom in remote places in Scotland, offered the strangers the produce of her little dairy, 'while better meat was getting ready.' And according to another custom, not yet wholly in desuetude, as the storm was now drifting off to leeward, the Master carried the Keeper to the top of his highest tower to admire a wide and waste extent of view, and to 'weary for his dinner.'

## CHAPTER XII

‘ Now dame,’ quoth he, ‘ Je vous dis sans doute,  
Had I nought of a capon but the liver,  
And of your white bread nought but a shiver,  
And after that a roasted pigge’s head  
(But I ne wold for me no beast were dead),  
Then had I with you homely sufferaunce.’

CHAUCER, *Sumner’s Tale*.

IT was not without some secret misgivings that Caleb set out upon his exploratory expedition. In fact, it was attended with a treble difficulty. He dared not tell his master the offence which he had that morning given to Bucklaw, just for the honour of the family ; he dared not acknowledge he had been too hasty in refusing the purse ; and, thirdly, he was somewhat apprehensive of unpleasant consequences upon his meeting Hayston under the impression of an affront, and probably by this time under the influence also of no small quantity of brandy.

Caleb, to do him justice, was as bold as any lion where the honour of the family of Ravenswood was concerned ; but his was that considerate valour which does not delight in unnecessary risks. This, however, was a secondary consideration ; the main point was to veil the indigence of the housekeeping at the castle, and to make good his vaunt of the cheer which his resources could procure, without Lockhard’s assistance, and without supplies from his master. This was as prime a point of honour with him as with the generous elephant with whom we have already compared him, who, being overtasked, broke his skull through the desperate exertions which he made to discharge his duty, when he perceived they were bringing up another to his assistance.

The village which they now approached had frequently afforded the distressed butler resources upon similar emergencies ; but his relations with it had been of late much altered

It was a little hamlet which straggled along the side of a creek formed by the discharge of a small brook into the sea, and was hidden from the castle, to which it had been in former times an appendage, by the intervention of the shoulder of a hill forming a projecting headland. It was called Wolf's Hope, (*i.e.* Wolf's Haven), and the few inhabitants gained a precarious subsistence by manning two or three fishing-boats in the herring season, and smuggling gin and brandy during the winter months. They paid a kind of hereditary respect to the Lords of Ravenswood ; but, in the difficulties of the family, most of the inhabitants of Wolf's Hope had contrived to get feu-rights<sup>1</sup> to their little possessions, their huts, kail-yards, and rights of common, so that they were emancipated from the chains of feudal dependence, and free from the various exactions with which, under every possible pretext, or without any pretext at all, the Scottish landlords of the period, themselves in great poverty, were wont to harass their still poorer tenants at will. They might be, on the whole, termed independent, a circumstance peculiarly galling to Caleb, who had been wont to exercise over them the same sweeping authority in levying contributions which was exercised in former times in England, when 'the royal purveyors, sallying forth from under the Gothic portcullis to purchase provisions with power and prerogative, instead of money, brought home the plunder of an hundred markets, and all that could be seized from a flying and hiding country, and deposited their spoil in a hundred caverns.'<sup>2</sup>

Caleb loved the memory and resented the downfall of that authority, which mimicked, on a petty scale, the grand contributions exacted by the feudal sovereigns. And as he fondly flattered himself that the awful rule and right supremacy, which assigned to the Barons of Ravenswood the first and most effective interest in all productions of nature within five miles of their castle, only slumbered, and was not departed for ever, he used every now and then to give the recollection of the inhabitants a little jog by some petty exaction. These were at first submitted to, with more or less readiness, by the inhabitants of the hamlet ; for they had been so long used to consider the wants of the Baron and his family as having a title to be preferred to their own, that their actual independence did not convey to them an immediate sense of freedom. They resembled a

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<sup>1</sup> That is, absolute rights of property for the payment of a sum annually, which is usually a trifle in such cases as are alluded to in the text.

<sup>2</sup> Burke's *Speech on Economical Reform: Works*, vol. iii. p. 250.



man that has been long fettered, who, even at liberty, feels in imagination the grasp of the handcuffs still binding his wrists. But the exercise of freedom is quickly followed with the natural consciousness of its immunities, as an enlarged prisoner, by the free use of his limbs, soon dispels the cramped feeling they had acquired when bound.

The inhabitants of Wolf's Hope began to grumble, to resist, and at length positively to refuse compliance with the exactions of Caleb Balderstone. It was in vain he reminded them, that when the eleventh Lord Ravenswood, called the Skipper, from his delight in naval matters, had encouraged the trade of their port by building the pier (a bulwark of stones rudely piled together), which protected the fishing-boats from the weather, it had been matter of understanding that he was to have the first stone of butter after the calving of every cow within the barony, and the first egg, thence called the Monday's egg, laid by every hen on every Monday in the year.

The feuars heard and scratched their heads, coughed, sneezed, and being pressed for answer, rejoined with one voice, 'They could not say' — the universal refuge of a Scottish peasant when pressed to admit a claim which his conscience owns, or perhaps his feelings, and his interest inclines him to deny.

Caleb, however, furnished the notables of Wolf's Hope with a note of the requisition of butter and eggs, which he claimed as arrears of the aforesaid subsidy, or kindly aid, payable as above mentioned; and having intimated that he would not be averse to compound the same for goods or money, if it was inconvenient to them to pay in kind, left them, as he hoped, to debate the mode of assessing themselves for that purpose. On the contrary, they met with a determined purpose of resisting the exaction, and were only undecided as to the mode of grounding their opposition, when the cooper, a very important person on a fishing-station, and one of the conscript fathers of the village, observed, 'That their hens had caickled mony a day for the Lords of Ravenswood, and it was time they suld caickle for those that gave them roosts and barley.' A unanimous grin intimated the assent of the assembly. 'And,' continued the orator, 'if it's your wull, I'll just tak a step as far as Dunse for Davie Dingwall, the writer, that's come frae the North to settle amang us, and he'll pit this job to rights, I'se warrant him.'

A day was accordingly fixed for holding a grand palaver at Wolf's Hope on the subject of Caleb's requisitions. and he was invited to attend at the hamlet for that purpose.

He went with open hands and empty stomach, trusting to fill the one on his master's account and the other on his own score, at the expense of the feuars of Wolf's Hope. But, death to his hopes! as he entered the eastern end of the straggling village, the awful form of Davie Dingwall, a sly, dry, hard-fisted, shrewd country attorney, who had already acted against the family of Ravenswood, and was a principal agent of Sir William Ashton, trotted in at the western extremity, bestriding a leathern portmanteau stuffed with the feu-charters of the hamlet, and hoping he had not kept Mr. Balderstone waiting, 'as he was instructed and fully empowered to pay or receive, compound or compensate, and, in fine, to agé<sup>1</sup> as accords, respecting all mutual and unsettled claims whatsoever, belonging or competent to the Honourable Edgar Ravenswood, commonly called the Master of Ravenswood ——'

'The *Right Honourable Edgar Lord Ravenswood*,' said Caleb, with great emphasis; for, though conscious he had little chance of advantage in the conflict to ensue, he was resolved not to sacrifice one jot of honour.

'Lord Ravenswood, then,' said the man of business — 'we shall not quarrel with you about titles of courtesy — commonly called Lord Ravenswood, or Master of Ravenswood, heritable proprietor of the lands and barony of Wolf's Crag, on the one part, and to John Whitefish and others, feuars in the town of Wolf's Hope, within the barony aforesaid, on the other part.'

Caleb was conscious, from sad experience, that he would wage a very different strife with this mercenary champion than with the individual feuars themselves, upon whose old recollections, predilections, and habits of thinking he might have wrought by a hundred indirect arguments, to which their deputy-representative was totally insensible. The issue of the debate proved the reality of his apprehensions. It was in vain he strained his eloquence and ingenuity, and collected into one mass all arguments arising from antique custom and hereditary respect, from the good deeds done by the Lord of Ravenswood to the community of Wolf's Hope in former days, and from what might be expected from them in future. The writer stuck to the contents of his feu-charters; he could not see it: 't was not in the bond. And when Caleb, determined to try what a little spirit would do, deprecated the consequences of Lord Ravenswood's withdrawing his protection from the burgh,

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<sup>1</sup> *i. e.*, To act as may be necessary and legal: a Scottish law phrase.

and even hinted at his using active measures of resentment, the man of law sneered in his face.

'His clients,' he said, 'had determined to do the best they could for their own town, and he thought Lord Ravenswood, since he was a lord, might have enough to do to look after his own castle. As to any threats of stouthrief oppression, by rule of thumb, or *via facti*, as the law termed it, he would have Mr. Balderstone recollect, that new times were not as old times; that they lived on the south of the Forth, and far from the Highlands; that his clients thought they were able to protect themselves; but should they find themselves mistaken, they would apply to the government for the protection of a corporal and four red-coats, who,' said Mr. Dingwall, with a grin, 'would be perfectly able to secure them against Lord Ravenswood, and all that he or his followers could do by the strong hand.'

If Caleb could have concentrated all the lightnings of aristocracy in his eye, to have struck dead this contemner of allegiance and privilege, he would have launched them at his head, without respect to the consequences. As it was, he was compelled to turn his course backward to the castle; and there he remained for full half a day invisible and inaccessible even to Mysie, sequestered in his own peculiar dungeon, where he sat burnishing a single pewter plate and whistling 'Maggie Lauder' six hours without intermission.

The issue of this unfortunate requisition had shut against Caleb all resources which could be derived from Wolf's Hope and its purlieus, the El Dorado, or Peru, from which, in all former cases of exigence, he had been able to extract some assistance. He had, indeed, in a manner vowed that the deil should have him, if ever he put the print of his foot within its causeway again. He had hitherto kept his word; and, strange to tell, this secession had, as he intended, in some degree, the effect of a punishment upon the refractory feuars. Mr. Balderstone had been a person in their eyes connected with a superior order of beings, whose presence used to grace their little festivities, whose advice they found useful on many occasions, and whose communications gave a sort of credit to their village. The place, they acknowledged, 'didna look as it used to do, and should do, since Mr. Caleb keepit the castle sae closely; but doubtless, touching the eggs and butter, it was a most unreasonable demand, as Mr. Dingwall had justly made manifest.'

Thus stood matters betwixt the parties, when the old butler, though it was gall and wormwood to him, found himself obliged

either to acknowledge before a strange man of quality, and, what was much worse, before that stranger's servant, the total inability of Wolf's Crag to produce a dinner, or he must trust to the compassion of the feuars of Wolf's Hope. It was a dreadful degradation; but necessity was equally imperious and lawless. With these feelings he entered the street of the village.

Willing to shake himself from his companion as soon as possible, he directed Mr. Lockhard to Luckie Sma'trash's change-house, where a din, proceeding from the revels of Bucklaw, Craigenfelt, and their party, sounded half-way down the street, while the red glare from the window overpowered the grey twilight which was now settling down, and glimmered against a parcel of old tubs, kegs, and barrels, piled up in the cooper's yard, on the other side of the way.

'If you, Mr. Lockhard,' said the old butler to his companion, 'will be pleased to step to the change-house where that light comes from, and where, as I judge, they are now singing "Cauld Kail in Aberdeen," ye may do your master's errand about the venison, and I will do mine about Bucklaw's bed, as I return frae getting the rest of the vivers. It's no that the venison is actually needfu,' he added, detaining his colleague by the button, 'to make up the dinner; but as a compliment to the hunters, ye ken; and, Mr. Lockhard, if they offer ye a drink o' yill, or a cup o' wine, or a glass o' brandy, ye'll be a wise man to take it, in case the thunner should hae soured ours at the castle, whilk is ower muckle to be dreaded.'

He then permitted Lockhard to depart; and with foot heavy as lead, and yet far lighter than his heart, stepped on through the unequal street of the straggling village, meditating on whom he ought to make his first attack. It was necessary he should find some one with whom old acknowledged greatness should weigh more than recent independence, and to whom his application might appear an act of high dignity, relenting at once and soothing. But he could not recollect an inhabitant of a mind so constructed. 'Our kail is like to be cauld enough too,' he reflected, as the chorus of 'Cauld Kail in Aberdeen' again reached his ears. The minister — he had got his presentation from the late lord, but they had quarrelled about teinds; the brewster's wife — she had trusted long, and the bill was aye scored up, and unless the dignity of the family should actually require it, it would be a sin to distress a widow woman. None was so able — but, on the other hand, none was likely to be less willing — to stand his friend upon the present occasion, than



Gibbie Girder, the man of tubs and barrels already mentioned, who had headed the insurrection in the matter of the egg and butter subsidy. 'But a' comes o' taking folk on the right side, I trow,' quoth Caleb to himself; 'and I had ance the ill hap to say he was but a Johnny New-come in our town, and the carle bore the family an ill-will ever since. But he married a bonny young quean, Jean Lightbody, auld Lightbody's daughter, him that was in the steading of Loup-the-Dyke; and auld Lightbody was married himsell to Marion, that was about my lady in the family forty years syne. I hae had mony a day's daffing wi' Jean's mither, and they say she bides on wi' them. The carle has Jacobuses and Georgiuses baith, an ane could get at them; and sure I am, it's doing him an honour him or his never deserved at our hand, the ungracious sumph; and if he loses by us a'thegither, he is e'en cheap o't: he can spare it brawly.'

Shaking off irresolution, therefore, and turning at once upon his heel, Caleb walked hastily back to the cooper's house, lifted the latch without ceremony, and, in a moment, found himself behind the 'hallan' or partition, from which position he could, himself unseen, reconnoitre the interior of the 'but,' or kitchen apartment, of the mansion.

Reverse of the sad menage at the Castle of Wolf's Crag, a bickering fire roared up the cooper's chimney. His wife, on the one side, in her pearlings and pudding-sleeves, put the last finishing touch to her holiday's apparel, while she contemplated a very handsome and good-humoured face in a broken mirror, raised upon the 'bink' (the shelves on which the plates are disposed) for her special accommodation. Her mother, old Luckie Loup-the-Dyke, 'a canty carline' as was within twenty miles of her, according to the unanimous report of the 'cummings,' or gossips, sat by the fire in the full glory of a grogram gown, lammer beads, and a clean cockernony, whiffing a snug pipe of tobacco, and superintending the affairs of the kitchen; for — sight more interesting to the anxious heart and craving entrails of the desponding seneschal than either buxom dame or canty cummer — there bubbled on the aforesaid bickering fire a huge pot, or rather cauldron, steaming with beef and brewis; while before it revolved two spits, turned each by one of the cooper's apprentices, seated in the opposite corners of the chimney, the one loaded with a quarter of mutton, while the other was graced with a fat goose and a brace of wild ducks. The sight and scent of such a land of plenty almost wholly overcame the drooping spirits of Caleb. He turned, for a moment's space, to



reconnoitre the 'ben,' or parlour end of the house, and there saw a sight scarce less affecting to his feelings — a large round table, covered for ten or twelve persons, decored (according to his own favourite term) with napery as white as snow, grand flagons of pewter, intermixed with one or two silver cups, containing, as was probable, something worthy the brilliancy of their outward appearance, clean trenchers, cutty spoons, knives and forks, sharp, burnished, and prompt for action, which lay all displayed as for an especial festival.

'The devil's in the peddling tub-coopering carle!' muttered Caleb, in all the envy of astonishment; 'it's a shame to see the like o' them gusting their gabs at sic a rate. But if some o' that gude cheer does not find its way to Wolf's Crag this night, my name is not Caleb Balderstone.'

So resolving, he entered the apartment, and, in all courteous greeting, saluted both the mother and the daughter. Wolf's Crag was the court of the barony, Caleb prime minister at Wolf's Crag; and it has ever been remarked that, though the masculine subject who pays the taxes sometimes growls at the courtiers by whom they are imposed, the said courtiers continue, nevertheless, welcome to the fair sex, to whom they furnish the newest small-talk and the earliest fashions. Both the dames were, therefore, at once about old Caleb's neck, setting up their throats together by way of welcome.

'Ay, sirs, Mr. Balderstone, and is this you? A sight of you is gude for sair een. Sit down — sit down; the gudeman will be blithe to see you — ye nar saw him sae cadgy in your life; but we are to christen our bit wean the night, as ye will hae heard, and doubtless ye will stay and see the ordinance. We hae killed a wether, and ane o' our lads has been out wi' his gun at the moss; ye used to like wild-fowl.'

'Na, na, gudewife,' said Caleb; 'I just keekit in to wish ye joy, and I wad be glad to hae spoken wi' the gudeman, but ——' moving, as if to go away.

'The ne'er a fit ye's gang,' said the elder dame, laughing and holding him fast, with a freedom which belonged to their old acquaintance; 'wha kens what ill it may bring to the bairn, if ye owerlook it in that gate?'

'But I'm in a preceese hurry, gudewife,' said the butler, suffering himself to be dragged to a seat without much resistance; 'and as to eating,' for he observed the mistress of the dwelling bustling about to place a trencher for him — 'as for eating — lack-a-day, we are just killed up yonder wi' eating

frae morning to night! It's shamefu' epicurism; but that's what we hae gotten frae the English pock-puddings.'

'Hout, never mind the English pock-puddings,' said Luckie Lightbody; 'try our puddings, Mr. Balderstone; there is black pudding and white-hass; try whilk ye like best.'

'Baith gude—baith excellent—canna be better; but the very smell is enough for me that hae dined sae lately (the faithful wretch had fasted since daybreak). But I wadna affront your housewifeskep, gudewife; and, with your permission, I'se e'en pit them in my napkin, and eat them to my supper at e'en, for I am wearied of Mysie's pastry and nonsense; ye ken landward dainties aye pleased me best, Marion, and landward lasses too (looking at the cooper's wife). Ne'er a bit but she looks far better than when she married Gilbert, and then she was the bonniest lass in our parochine and the neist till't. But gawsie cow, goodly calf.'

The women smiled at the compliment each to herself, and they smiled again to each other as Caleb wrapt up the puddings in a towel which he had brought with him, as a dragoon carries his foraging bag to receive what may fall in his way.

'And what news at the castle?' quo' the gudewife.

'News! The bravest news ye ever heard—the Lord Keeper's up yonder wi' his fair daughter, just ready to fling her at my lord's head, if he winna tak her out o' his arms; and I'se warrant he'll stitch our auld lands of Ravenswood to her petticoat tail.'

'Eh! sirs—ay!—and will he hae her? and is she weel-favoured? and what's the colour o' her hair? and does she wear a habit or a raily?' were the questions which the females showered upon the butler.

'Hout tout! it wad tak a man a day to answer a' your questions, and I hae hardly a minute. Where's the gude-man?'

'Awa' to fetch the minister,' said Mrs. Girder, 'precious Mr. Peter Bide-the-Bent, frae the Mosshead; the honest man has the rheumatism wi' lying in the hills in the persecution.'

'Ay! a Whig and a mountain-man, nae less!' said Caleb, with a peevishness he could not suppress. 'I hae seen the day, Luckie, when worthy Mr. Cuffcushion and the service-book would hae served your turn (to the elder dame), or ony honest woman in like circumstances.'

'And that's true too,' said Mrs. Lightbody, 'but what can a body do? Jean maun baith sing her psalms and busk her

cockernony the gate the gudeman likes, and nae ither gate ; for he 's maister and mair at hame, I can tell ye, Mr. Balderstone.'

'Ay, ay, and does he guide the gear too?' said Caleb, to whose projects masculine rule boded little good.

'Ilka penny on 't ; but he 'll dress her as dink as a daisy, as ye see ; sae she has little reason to complain : where there 's ane better aff there 's ten waur.'

'Aweel, gudewife,' said Caleb, crestfallen, but not beaten off, 'that wasna the way ye guided your gudeman ; but ilka land has its ain lauch. I maun be ganging. I just wanted to round in the gudeman's lug, that I heard them say up-bye yonder that Peter Puncheon, that was cooper to the Queen's stores at the Timmer Burse at Leith, is dead ; sae I thought that maybe a word frae my lord to the Lord Keeper might hae served Gilbert ; but since he 's frae hame ——'

'O, but ye maun stay his hame-coming,' said the dame. 'I aye telled the gudeman ye meant weel to him ; but he taks the tout at every bit lippening word.'

'Aweel, I 'll stay the last minute I can.'

'And so,' said the handsome young spouse of Mr. Girder, 'ye think this Miss Ashton is weel-favoured? Troth, and sae should she, to set up for our young lord, with a face and a hand, and a seat on his horse, that might become a king's son. D' ye ken that he aye glowers up at my window, Mr. Balderstone, when he chances to ride thro' the town? Sae I hae a right to ken what like he is, as weel as ony body.'

'I ken that brawly,' said Caleb, 'for I hae heard his lordship say the cooper's wife had the blackest ee in the barony ; and I said, "Weel may that be, my lord, for it was her mither's afore her, as I ken to my cost." Eh, Marion? Ha, ha, ha! Ah! these were merry days!'

'Hout awa', auld carle,' said the old dame, 'to speak sic daffing to young folk. But, Jean — fie, woman, dinna ye hear the bairn greet? I'se warrant it's that dreary weid<sup>1</sup> has come ower 't again.'

Up got mother and grandmother, and scoured away, jostling each other as they ran, into some remote corner of the teneament, where the young hero of the evening was deposited. When Caleb saw the coast fairly clear, he took an invigorating pinch of snuff, to sharpen and confirm his resolution.

'Cauld be my cast,' thought he, 'if either Bide-the-Bent or Girder taste that broche of wild-fowl this evening'; and then

<sup>1</sup> *Weid*, a feverish cold ; a disorder incident to infants and to females, is so called.

addressing the eldest turnspit, a boy of about eleven years old, and putting a penny into his hand, he said, 'Here is twal pennies,<sup>1</sup> my man; carry that ower to Mrs. Sma'trash, and bid her fill my mill wi' snishing, and I'll turn the broche for ye in the meantime; and she will gie ye a ginger-bread snap for your pains.'

No sooner was the elder boy departed on this mission than Caleb, looking the remaining turnspit gravely and steadily in the face, removed from the fire the spit bearing the wild-fowl of which he had undertaken the charge, clapped his hat on his head, and fairly marched off with it. He stopped at the door of the change-house only to say, in a few brief words, that Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw was not to expect a bed that evening in the castle.

If this message was too briefly delivered by Caleb, it became absolute rudeness when conveyed through the medium of a suburb landlady; and Bucklaw was, as a more calm and temperate man might have been, highly incensed. Captain Craigen-gelt proposed, with the unanimous applause of all present, that they should course the old fox (meaning Caleb) ere he got to cover, and toss him in a blanket. But Lockhard intimated to his master's servants and those of Lord Bittlebrains, in a tone of authority, that the slightest impertinence to the Master of Ravenswood's domestic would give Sir William Ashton the highest offence. And having so said, in a manner sufficient to prevent any aggression on their part, he left the public-house, taking along with him two servants loaded with such provisions as he had been able to procure, and overtook Caleb just when he had cleared the village.

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<sup>1</sup> Monetæ Scoticæ, scilicet.

## CHAPTER XIII

Should I take aught of you ? 'T is true I begged now ;  
And what is worse than that, I stole a kindness ;  
And, what is worst of all, I lost my way in 't.

*Wit without Money.*

THE face of the little boy, sole witness of Caleb's infringement upon the laws at once of property and hospitality, would have made a good picture. He sat motionless, as if he had witnessed some of the spectral appearances which he had heard told of in a winter's evening ; and as he forgot his own duty, and allowed his spit to stand still, he added to the misfortunes of the evening by suffering the mutton to burn as black as coal. He was first recalled from his trance of astonishment by a hearty cuff administered by Dame Lightbody, who, in whatever other respects she might conform to her name, was a woman strong of person, and expert in the use of her hands, as some say her deceased husband had known to his cost.

'What garr'd ye let the roast burn, ye ill-cleckit gude-fornought ?'

'I dinna ken,' said the boy.

'And where's that ill-deedy gett, Giles ?'

'I dinna ken,' blubbered the astonished declarant.

'And where's Mr. Balderstone ? — and abune a', and in the name of council and kirk-session, that I suld say sae, where's the broche wi' the wild-fowl ?'

As Mrs. Girder here entered, and joined her mother's exclamations, screaming into one ear while the old lady deafened the other, they succeeded in so utterly confounding the unhappy urchin, that he could not for some time tell his story at all, and it was only when the elder boy returned that the truth began to dawn on their minds.

'Weel, sirs !' said Mrs. Lightbody, 'wha wad hae thought o' Caleb Balderstone playing an auld acquaintance sic a pliskie !'

'C, weary on him !' said the spouse of Mr. Girder ; 'and



what am I to say to the gudeman? He'll brain me, if there wasna anither woman in a' Wolf's Hope.'

'Hout tout, silly quean,' said the mother; 'na, na, it's come to muckle, but it's no come to that neither; for an he brain you he maun brain me, and I have garr'd his betters stand back. Hands aff is fair play; we maunna heed a bit flyting.'

The tramp of horses now announced the arrival of the cooper, with the minister. They had no sooner dismounted than they made for the kitchen fire, for the evening was cool after the thunderstorm, and the woods wet and dirty. The young gudewife, strong in the charms of her Sunday gown and biggonets, threw herself in the way of receiving the first attack, while her mother, like the veteran division of the Roman legion, remained in the rear, ready to support her in case of necessity. Both hoped to protract the discovery of what had happened — the mother, by interposing her bustling person betwixt Mr. Girder and the fire, and the daughter, by the extreme cordiality with which she received the minister and her husband, and the anxious fears which she expressed lest they should have 'gotten cauld.'

'Cauld!' quoth the husband, surlily, for he was not of that class of lords and masters whose wives are viceroys over them, 'we'll be cauld eneugh, I think, if ye dinna let us in to the fire.'

And so saying, he burst his way through both lines of defence; and, as he had a careful eye over his property of every kind, he perceived at one glance the absence of the spit with its savoury burden. 'What the deil, woman ——'

'Fie for shame!' exclaimed both the women; 'and before Mr. Bide-the-Bent!'

'I stand reproved,' said the cooper; 'but ——'

'The taking in our mouths the name of the great enemy of our souls,' said Mr. Bide-the-Bent ——

'I stand reproved,' said the cooper.

'—Is an exposing ourselves to his temptations,' continued the reverend monitor, 'and an inviting, or, in some sort, a compelling, of him to lay aside his other trafficking with unhappy persons, and wait upon those in whose speech his name is frequent.'

'Weel, weel, Mr. Bide-the-Bent, can a man do mair than stand reproved?' said the cooper; 'but just let me ask the women what for they hae dished the wild-fowl before we came.'

'They arena dished, Gilbert,' said his wife; 'but — but an accident ——'

'What accident?' said Girder, with flashing eyes. 'Nae ill come ower them, I trust? Uh?'

His wife, who stood much in awe of him, durst not reply, but her mother bustled up to her support, with arms disposed as if they were about to be a-kimbo at the next reply. — 'I gied them to an acquaintance of mine, Gibbie Girder; and what about it now?'

Her excess of assurance struck Girder mute for an instant. 'And *ye* gied the wild-fowl, the best end of our christening dinner, to a friend of yours, ye auld rudas! And what might *his* name be, I pray ye?'

'Just worthy Mr. Caleb Balderstone — frae Wolf's Crag,' answered Marion, prompt and prepared for battle.

Girder's wrath foamed over all restraint. If there was a circumstance which could have added to the resentment he felt, it was that this extravagant donation had been made in favour of our friend Caleb, towards whom, for reasons to which the reader is no stranger, he nourished a decided resentment. He raised his riding-wand against the elder matron, but she stood firm, collected in herself, and undauntedly brandished the iron ladle with which she had just been 'flaming' (*Anglicè*, basting) the roast of mutton. Her weapon was certainly the better, and her arm not the weakest of the two; so that Gilbert thought it safest to turn short off upon his wife, who had by this time hatched a sort of hysterical whine, which greatly moved the minister, who was in fact as simple and kind-hearted a creature as ever breathed. 'And you, ye thowless jade, to sit still and see my substance disposed upon to an idle, drunken, reprobate, worm-eaten serving-man, just because he kittles the lugs o' a silly auld wife wi' useless clavers, and every twa words a lee? I'll gar you as gude ——'

Here the minister interposed, both by voice and action, while Dame Lightbody threw herself in front of her daughter, and flourished her ladle.

'Am I no to chastise my ain wife?' exclaimed the cooper, very indignantly.

'Ye may chastise your ain wife if you like,' answered Dame Lightbody; 'but ye shall never lay finger on my daughter, and that ye may found upon.'

'For shame, Mr. Girder!' said the clergyman; 'this is what I little expected to have seen of you, that you suld give rein

to your sinful passions against your nearest and your dearest, and this night too, when ye are called to the most solemn duty of a Christian parent; and a' for what? For a redundancy of creature-comforts, as worthless as they are unneedful.'

'Worthless!' exclaimed the cooper. 'A better guse never walkit on stubble; twa finer, dentier wild ducks never wat a feather.'

'Be it sae, neighbour,' rejoined the minister; 'but see what superfluities are yet revolving before your fire. I have seen the day when ten of the bannocks which stand upon that board would have been an acceptable dainty to as many men, that were starving on hills and bogs, and in caves of the earth, for the Gospel's sake.'

'And that's what vexes me maist of a,' said the cooper, anxious to get some one to sympathise with his not altogether causeless anger; 'an the quean had gien it to ony suffering sant, or to ony body ava but that reaving, lying, oppressing Tory villain, that rade in the wicked troop of militia when it was commanded out against the sants at Bothwell Brig by the auld tyrant Allan Ravenswood, that is gane to his place, I wad the less hae minded it. But to gie the principal part o' the feast to the like o' him ——!'

'Aweel, Gilbert,' said the minister, 'and dinna ye see a high judgment in this? The seed of the righteous are not seen begging their bread: think of the son of a powerful oppressor being brought to the pass of supporting his household from your fulness.'

'And, besides,' said the wife, 'it wasna for Lord Ravenswood neither, an he wad hear but a body speak: it was to help to entertain the Lord Keeper, as they ca' him, that's up yonder at Wolf's Crag.'

'Sir William Ashton at Wolf's Crag!' ejaculated the astonished man of hoops and staves.

'And hand and glove wi' Lord Ravenswood,' added Dame Lightbody.

'Doited idiot! that auld, clavering sneekdrawer wad gar ye trow the moon is made of green cheese. The Lord Keeper and Ravenswood! they are cat and dog, hare and hound.'

'I tell ye they are man and wife, and gree better than some others that are sae,' retorted the mother-in-law; 'forbye, Peter Puncheon, that's cooper to the Queen's stores, is dead, and the place is to fill, and ——'

'Od guide us, wull ye haud your skirling tongues!' said

Girder, — for we are to remark, that this explanation was given like a catch for two voices, the younger dame, much encouraged by the turn of the debate, taking up and repeating in a higher tone the words as fast as they were uttered by her mother.

‘The gudewife says naething but what’s true, maister,’ said Girder’s foreman, who had come in during the fray. ‘I saw the Lord Keeper’s servants drinking and driving ower at Luckie Sma’trash’s, ower-by yonder.’

‘And is their maister up at Wolf’s Crag?’ said Girder.

‘Ay, troth is he,’ replied his man of confidence.

‘And friends wi’ Ravenswood?’

‘It’s like sae,’ answered the foreman, ‘since he is putting up<sup>1</sup> wi’ him.’

‘And Peter Puncheon’s dead?’

‘Ay, ay, Puncheon has leaked out at last, the auld carle,’ said the foreman; ‘mony a dribble o’ brandy has gaen through him in his day. But as for the broche and the wild-fowl, the saddle’s no aff your mare yet, maister, and I could follow and bring it back, for Mr. Balderstone’s no far aff the town yet.’

‘Do sae, Will; and come here, I’ll tell ye what to do when ye overtake him.’

He relieved the females of his presence, and gave Will his private instructions.

‘A bonny-like thing,’ said the mother-in-law, as the cooper re-entered the apartment, ‘to send the innocent lad after an armed man, when ye ken Mr. Balderstone aye wears a rapier, and whiles a dirk into the bargain.’

‘I trust,’ said the minister, ‘ye have reflected weel on what ye have done, lest you should minister cause of strife, of which it is my duty to say, he who affordeth matter, albeit he himself striketh not, is in no manner guiltless.’

‘Never fash your beard, Mr. Bide-the-Bent,’ replied Girder; ‘ane canna get their breath out between wives and ministers. I ken best how to turn my ain cake. Jean, serve up the dinner, and nae mair about it.’

Nor did he again allude to the deficiency in the course of the evening.

Meantime, the foreman, mounted on his master’s steed, and charged with his special orders, pricked swiftly forth in pursuit of the marauder Caleb. That personage, it may be imagined, did not linger by the way. He intermitted even his

<sup>1</sup> Taking up his abode.

dearly-beloved chatter, for the purpose of making more haste, only assuring Mr. Lockhard that he had made the purveyor's wife give the wild-fowl a few turns before the fire, in case that Mysie, who had been so much alarmed by the thunder, should not have her kitchen-grate in full splendour. Meanwhile, alleging the necessity of being at Wolf's Crag as soon as possible, he pushed on so fast that his companions could scarce keep up with him. He began already to think he was safe from pursuit, having gained the summit of the swelling eminence which divides Wolf's Crag from the village, when he heard the distant tread of a horse, and a voice which shouted at intervals, 'Mr. Caleb — Mr. Balderstone — Mr. Caleb Balderstone — hollo — bide a wee!'

Caleb, it may be well believed, was in no hurry to acknowledge the summons. First, he would not hear it, and faced his companions down, that it was the echo of the wind; then he said it was not worth stopping for; and, at length, halting reluctantly, as the figure of the horseman appeared through the shades of the evening, he bent up his whole soul to the task of defending his prey, threw himself into an attitude of dignity, advanced the spit, which in his grasp might with its burden seem both spear and shield, and firmly resolved to die rather than surrender it.

What was his astonishment, when the cooper's foreman, riding up and addressing him with respect, told him, 'His master was very sorry he was absent when he came to his dwelling, and grieved that he could not tarry the christening dinner; and that he had taen the freedom to send a sma' runlet of sack, and ane anker of brandy, as he understood there were guests at the castle, and that they were short of preparation.'

I have heard somewhere a story of an elderly gentleman who was pursued by a bear that had gotten loose from its muzzle, until completely exhausted. In a fit of desperation, he faced round upon Bruin and lifted his cane; at the sight of which the instinct of discipline prevailed, and the animal, instead of tearing him to pieces, rose up upon his hind-legs and instantly began to shuffle a saraband. Not less than the joyful surprise of the senior, who had supposed himself in the extremity of peril from which he was thus unexpectedly relieved, was that of our excellent friend Caleb, when he found the pursuer intended to add to his prize, instead of bereaving him of it. He recovered his latitude, however, instantly, so soon as the foreman, stooping from his nag, where he sate perched betwixt the



two barrels, whispered in his ear — ‘If ony thing about Peter Puncheon’s place could be airted their way, John Girder wad mak it better to the Master of Ravenswood than a pair of new gloves ; and that he wad be blithe to speak wi’ Maister Balderstone on that head, and he wad find him as pliant as a hoop-willow in a’ that he could wish of him.’

Caleb heard all this without rendering any answer, except that of all great men from Louis XIV. downwards, namely, ‘We will see about it’ ; and then added aloud, for the edification of Mr. Lockhard — ‘Your master has acted with becoming civility and attention in forwarding the liquors, and I will not fail to represent it properly to my Lord Ravenswood. And, my lad,’ he said, ‘you may ride on to the castle, and if none of the servants are returned, whilk is to be dreaded, as they make day and night of it when they are out of sight, ye may put them into the porter’s lodge, whilk is on the right hand of the great entry ; the porter has got leave to go to see his friends, sae ye will meet no ane to steer ye.’

The foreman, having received his orders, rode on ; and having deposited the casks in the deserted and ruinous porter’s lodge, he returned unquestioned by any one. Having thus executed his master’s commission, and doffed his bonnet to Caleb and his company as he repassed them in his way to the village, he returned to have his share of the christening festivity.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Raid of Caleb Balderstone. Note 5.

## CHAPTER XIV

As, to the Autumn breeze's bugle sound,  
Various and vague the dry leaves dance their round ;  
Or, from the garner-door, on ether borne,  
The chaff flies devious from the winnow'd corn ;  
So vague, so devious, at the breath of heaven,  
From their fix'd aim are mortal counsels driv'n.

*Anonymous.*

WE left Caleb Balderstone in the extremity of triumph at the success of his various achievements for the honour of the house of Ravenswood. When he had mustered and marshalled his dishes of divers kinds, a more royal provision had not been seen in Wolf's Crag since the funeral feast of its deceased lord. Great was the glory of the serving-man, as he 'decored' the old oaken table with a clean cloth, and arranged upon it carbonaded venison and roasted wild-fowl, with a glance, every now and then, as if to upbraid the incredulity of his master and his guests ; and with many a story, more or less true, was Lockhard that evening regaled concerning the ancient grandeur of Wolf's Crag, and the sway of its barons over the country in their neighborhood.

'A vassal scarce held a calf or a lamb his ain, till he had first asked if the Lord of Ravenswood was pleased to accept it ; and they were obliged to ask the lord's consent before they married in these days, and mony a merry tale they tell about that right as weel as others. And although,' said Caleb, 'these times are not like the gude auld times, when authority had its right, yet true it is, Mr. Lockhard, and you yoursell may partly have remarked, that we of the house of Ravenswood do our endeavour in keeping up, by all just and lawful exertion of our baronial authority, that due and fitting connexion betwixt superior and vassal, whilk is in some danger of falling into desuetude, owing to the general license and misrule of these present unhappy times.'

'Umph !' said Mr. Lockhard ; 'and if I may inquire, Mr. Balderstone, pray do you find your people at the village yonder

amenable? for I must needs say, that at Ravenswood Castle, now pertaining to my master, the Lord Keeper, ye have not left behind ye the most compliant set of tenantry.'

'Ah! but Mr. Lockhard,' replied Caleb, 'ye must consider there has been a change of hands, and the auld lord might expect twa turns frae them, when the new-comer canna get ane. A dour and fractious set they were, thae tenants of Ravenswood, and ill to live wi' when they dinna ken their master; and if your master put them mad ance, the whole country will not put them down.'

'Troth,' said Mr. Lockhard, 'an such be the case, I think the wisest thing for us a' wad be to hammer up a match between your young lord and our winsome young leddy up-bye there; and Sir William might just stitch your auld barony to her gown-sleeve, and he wad sune cuittle<sup>1</sup> another out o' somebody else, sic a lang head as he has.'

Caleb shook his head. 'I wish,' he said — 'I wish that may answer, Mr. Lockhard. There are auld prophecies about this house I wad like ill to see fulfilled wi' my auld een, that has seen evil enough already.'

'Pshaw! never mind freits,' said his brother butler; 'if the young folk liked ane anither, they wad make a winsome couple. But, to say truth, there is a leddy sits in our hall-neuk, maun have her hand in that as weel as in every other job. But there's no harm in drinking to their healths, and I will fill Mrs. Mysie a cup of Mr. Girder's canary.'

While they thus enjoyed themselves in the kitchen, the company in the hall were not less pleasantly engaged. So soon as Ravenswood had determined upon giving the Lord Keeper such hospitality as he had to offer, he deemed it incumbent on him to assume the open and courteous brow of a well-pleased host. It has been often remarked, that when a man commences by acting a character, he frequently ends by adopting it in good earnest. In the course of an hour or two, Ravenswood, to his own surprise, found himself in the situation of one who frankly does his best to entertain welcome and honoured guests. How much of this change in his disposition was to be ascribed to the beauty and simplicity of Miss Ashton, to the readiness with which she accommodated herself to the inconveniences of her situation; how much to the smooth and plausible conversation of the Lord Keeper, remarkably gifted with those words which

<sup>1</sup> *Cuittle* may answer to the elegant modern phrase *diddle*.

win the ear, must be left to the reader's ingenuity to conjecture. But Ravenswood was insensible to neither.

The Lord Keeper was a veteran statesman, well acquainted with courts and cabinets, and intimate with all the various turns of public affairs during the last eventful years of the 17th century. He could talk, from his own knowledge, of men and events, in a way which failed not to win attention, and had the peculiar art, while he never said a word which committed himself, at the same time to persuade the hearer that he was speaking without the least shadow of scrupulous caution or reserve. Ravenswood, in spite of his prejudices and real grounds of resentment, felt himself at once amused and instructed in listening to him, while the statesman, whose inward feelings had at first so much impeded his efforts to make himself known, had now regained all the ease and fluency of a silver-tongued lawyer of the very highest order.

His daughter did not speak much, but she smiled; and what she did say argued a submissive gentleness, and a desire to give pleasure, which, to a proud man like Ravenswood, was more fascinating than the most brilliant wit. Above all, he could not but observe that, whether from gratitude or from some other motive, he himself, in his deserted and unprovided hall, was as much the object of respectful attention to his guests as he would have been when surrounded by all the appliances and means of hospitality proper to his high birth. All deficiencies passed unobserved, or, if they did not escape notice, it was to praise the substitutes which Caleb had contrived to supply the want of the usual accommodations. Where a smile was unavoidable, it was a very good-humoured one, and often coupled with some well-turned compliment, to show how much the guests esteemed the merits of their noble host, how little they thought of the inconveniences with which they were surrounded. I am not sure whether the pride of being found to outbalance, in virtue of his own personal merit, all the disadvantages of fortune, did not make as favourable an impression upon the haughty heart of the Master of Ravenswood as the conversation of the father and the beauty of Lucy Ashton.

The hour of repose arrived. The Keeper and his daughter retired to their apartments, which were 'decorated' more properly than could have been anticipated. In making the necessary arrangements, Mysie had indeed enjoyed the assistance of a gossip who had arrived from the village upon an exploratory expedition, but had been arrested by Caleb, and impressed into

the domestic drudgery of the evening ; so that, instead of returning home to describe the dress and person of the grand young lady, she found herself compelled to be active in the domestic economy of Wolf's Crag.

According to the custom of the time, the Master of Ravenswood attended the Lord Keeper to his apartment, followed by Caleb, who placed on the table, with all the ceremonials due to torches of wax, two rudely-framed tallow-candles, such as in those days were only used by the peasantry, hooped in paltry clasps of wire, which served for candlesticks. He then disappeared, and presently entered with two earthen flagons (the china, he said, had been little used since my lady's time), one filled with canary wine, the other with brandy.<sup>1</sup> The canary sack, unheeding all probabilities of detention, he declared had been twenty years in the cellars of Wolf's Crag, 'though it was not for him to speak before their honours ; the brandy — it was weel-kenn'd liquor, as mild as mead and as strong as Samson ; it had been in the house ever since the memorable revel, in which auld Micklestob had been slain at the head of the stair by Jamie of Jenklebrae, on account of the honour of the worshipful Lady Muirend, wha was in some sort an ally of the family ; nathless ——'

'But to cut that matter short, Mr. Caleb,' said the Keeper, 'perhaps you will favour me with a ewer of water.'

'God forbid your lordship should drink water in this family,' replied Caleb, 'to the disgrace of so honourable an house !'

'Nevertheless, if his lordship have a fancy,' said the Master, smiling, 'I think you might indulge him ; for, if I mistake not, there has been water drank here at no distant date, and with good relish too.'

'To be sure, if his lordship has a fancy,' said Caleb ; and re-entering with a jug of pure element — 'He will scarce find such water anywhere as is drawn frae the well at Wolf's Crag ; nevertheless ——'

'Nevertheless, we must leave the Lord Keeper to his repose in this poor chamber of ours,' said the Master of Ravenswood, interrupting his talkative domestic, who immediately turning to the doorway, with a profound reverence, prepared to usher his master from the secret chamber.

But the Lord Keeper prevented his host's departure. — 'I have but one word to say to the Master of Ravenswood, Mr. Caleb, and I fancy he will excuse your waiting.'

<sup>1</sup> See Ancient Hospitality. Note 6.



With a second reverence, lower than the former, Caleb withdrew; and his master stood motionless, expecting, with considerable embarrassment, what was to close the events of a day fraught with unexpected incidents.

‘Master of Ravenswood,’ said Sir William Ashton, with some embarrassment, ‘I hope you understand the Christian law too well to suffer the sun to set upon your anger.’

The Master blushed and replied, ‘He had no occasion that evening to exercise the duty enjoined upon him by his Christian faith.’

‘I should have thought otherwise,’ said his guest, ‘considering the various subjects of dispute and litigation which have unhappily occurred more frequently than was desirable or necessary betwixt the late honourable lord, your father, and myself.’

‘I could wish, my lord,’ said Ravenswood, agitated by suppressed emotion, ‘that reference to these circumstances should be made anywhere rather than under my father’s roof.’

‘I should have felt the delicacy of this appeal at another time,’ said Sir William Ashton, ‘but now I must proceed with what I mean to say. I have suffered too much in my own mind, from the false delicacy which prevented my soliciting with earnestness, what indeed I frequently requested, a personal communing with your father: much distress of mind to him and to me might have been prevented.’

‘It is true,’ said Ravenswood, after a moment’s reflection, ‘I have heard my father say your lordship had proposed a personal interview.’

‘Proposed, my dear Master? I did indeed propose it; but I ought to have begged, entreated, beseeched it. I ought to have torn away the veil which interested persons had stretched betwixt us, and shown myself as I was, willing to sacrifice a considerable part even of my legal rights, in order to conciliate feelings so natural as his must be allowed to have been. Let me say for myself, my young friend, for so I will call you, that had your father and I spent the same time together which my good fortune has allowed me to-day to pass in your company, it is possible the land might yet have enjoyed one of the most respectable of its ancient nobility, and I should have been spared the pain of parting in enmity from a person whose general character I so much admired and honoured.’

He put his handkerchief to his eyes. Ravenswood also was moved, but awaited in silence the progress of this extraordinary communication.

‘It is necessary,’ continued the Lord Keeper, ‘and proper that you should understand, that there have been many points betwixt us, in which, although I judged it proper that there should be an exact ascertainment of my legal rights by the decree of a court of justice, yet it was never my intention to press them beyond the verge of equity.’

‘My lord,’ said the Master of Ravenswood, ‘it is unnecessary to pursue this topic farther. What the law will give you, or has given you, you enjoy — or you shall enjoy; neither my father nor myself would have received anything on the footing of favour.’

‘Favour! No, you misunderstand me,’ resumed the Keeper; ‘or rather you are no lawyer. A right may be good in law, and ascertained to be so, which yet a man of honour may not in every case care to avail himself of.’

‘I am sorry for it, my lord,’ said the Master.

‘Nay, nay,’ retorted his guest, ‘you speak like a young counsellor; your spirit goes before your wit. There are many things still open for decision betwixt us. Can you blame me, an old man desirous of peace, and in the castle of a young nobleman who has saved my daughter’s life and my own, that I am desirous, anxiously desirous, that these should be settled on the most liberal principles?’

The old man kept fast hold of the Master’s passive hand as he spoke, and made it impossible for him, be his predetermination what it would, to return any other than an acquiescent reply; and wishing his guest good-night, he postponed farther conference until the next morning.

Ravenswood hurried into the hall, where he was to spend the night, and for a time traversed its pavement with a disordered and rapid pace. His mortal foe was under his roof, yet his sentiments towards him were neither those of a feudal enemy nor of a true Christian. He felt as if he could neither forgive him in the one character, nor follow forth his vengeance in the other, but that he was making a base and dishonourable composition betwixt his resentment against the father and his affection for his daughter. He cursed himself, as he hurried to and fro in the pale moonlight, and more ruddy gleams of the expiring wood-fire. He threw open and shut the latticed windows with violence, as if alike impatient of the admission and exclusion of free air. At length, however, the torrent of passion foamed off its madness, and he flung himself into the chair which he proposed as his place of repose for the night.

‘If, in reality,’ such were the calmer thoughts that followed the first tempest of his passion — ‘if, in reality, this man desires no more than the law allows him — if he is willing to adjust even his acknowledged rights upon an equitable footing, what could be my father’s cause of complaint? — what is mine? Those from whom we won our ancient possessions fell under the sword of my ancestors, and left lands and livings to the conquerors; we sink under the force of the law, now too powerful for the Scottish chivalry. Let us parley with the victors of the day, as if we had been besieged in our fortress, and without hope of relief. This man may be other than I have thought him; and his daughter — but I have resolved not to think of her.’

He wrapt his cloak around him, fell asleep, and dreamed of Lucy Ashton till daylight gleamed through the lattices.

## CHAPTER XV

We worldly men, when we see friends and kinsmen  
Past hope sunk in their fortunes, lend no hand  
To lift them up, but rather set our feet  
Upon their heads to press them to the bottom,  
As I must yield with you I practised it ;  
But now I see you in a way to rise,  
I can and will assist you.

*New Way to pay Old Debts.*

THE Lord Keeper carried with him, to a couch harder than he was accustomed to stretch himself upon, the same ambitious thoughts and political perplexities which drive sleep from the softest down that ever spread a bed of state. He had sailed long enough amid the contending tides and currents of the time to be sensible of their peril, and of the necessity of trimming his vessel to the prevailing wind, if he would have her escape shipwreck in the storm. The nature of his talents, and the timorousness of disposition connected with them, had made him assume the pliability of the versatile old Earl of Northampton, who explained the art by which he kept his ground during all the changes of state, from the reign of Henry VIII. to that of Elizabeth, by the frank avowal, that he was born of the willow, not of the oak. It had accordingly been Sir William Ashton's policy, on all occasions, to watch the changes in the political horizon, and, ere yet the conflict was decided, to negotiate some interest for himself with the party most likely to prove victorious. His time-serving disposition was well known, and excited the contempt of the more daring leaders of both factions in the state. But his talents were of a useful and practical kind, and his legal knowledge held in high estimation ; and they so far counterbalanced other deficiencies that those in power were glad to use and to reward, though without absolutely trusting or greatly respecting, him.

The Marquis of A—— had used his utmost influence to

effect a change in the Scottish cabinet, and his schemes had been of late so well laid and so ably supported, that there appeared a very great chance of his proving ultimately successful. He did not, however, feel so strong or so confident as to neglect any means of drawing recruits to his standard. The acquisition of the Lord Keeper was deemed of some importance, and a friend, perfectly acquainted with his circumstances and character, became responsible for his political conversion.

When this gentleman arrived at Ravenswood Castle upon a visit, the real purpose of which was disguised under general courtesy, he found the prevailing fear which at present beset the Lord Keeper was that of danger to his own person from the Master of Ravenswood. The language which the blind sibyl, Old Alice, had used ; the sudden appearance of the Master, armed, and within his precincts, immediately after he had been warned against danger from him ; the cold and haughty return received in exchange for the acknowledgments with which he loaded him for his timely protection, had all made a strong impression on his imagination.

So soon as the Marquis's political agent found how the wind sat, he began to insinuate fears and doubts of another kind, scarce less calculated to affect the Lord Keeper. He inquired with seeming interest, whether the proceedings in Sir William's complicated litigation with the Ravenswood family were out of court, and settled without the possibility of appeal. The Lord Keeper answered in the affirmative ; but his interrogator was too well informed to be imposed upon. He pointed out to him, by unanswerable arguments, that some of the most important points which had been decided in his favour against the house of Ravenswood were liable, under the Treaty of Union, to be reviewed by the British House of Peers, a court of equity of which the Lord Keeper felt an instinctive dread. This course came instead of an appeal to the old Scottish Parliament, or, as it was technically termed, 'a protestation for remeid in law.'

The Lord Keeper, after he had for some time disputed the legality of such a proceeding, was compelled, at length, to comfort himself with the improbability of the young Master of Ravenswood's finding friends in parliament capable of stirring in so weighty an affair.

'Do not comfort yourself with that false hope,' said his wily friend ; 'it is possible that, in the next session of Parliament, young Ravenswood may find more friends and favour even than your lordship.'



‘That would be a sight worth seeing,’ said the Keeper, scornfully.

‘And yet,’ said his friend, ‘such things have been seen ere now, and in our own time. There are many at the head of affairs even now that a few years ago were under hiding for their lives; and many a man now dines on plate of silver that was fain to eat his crowdy without a bicker; and many a high head has been brought full low among us in as short a space. Scott of Scotstarvet’s *Staggering State of Scots Statesmen*, of which curious memoir you showed me a manuscript, has been outstaggered in our time.’

The Lord Keeper answered with a deep sigh, ‘That these mutations were no new sights in Scotland, and had been witnessed long before the time of the satirical author he had quoted. It was many a long year,’ he said, ‘since Fordun had quoted as an ancient proverb, “*Neque dives, neque fortis, sed nec sapiens Scotus, prædominante invidia, diu durabit in terra.*”’

‘And be assured, my esteemed friend,’ was the answer, ‘that even your long services to the state, or deep legal knowledge, will not save you, or render your estate stable, if the Marquis of A—— comes in with a party in the British Parliament. You know that the deceased Lord Ravenswood was his near ally, his lady being fifth in descent from the Knight of Tillibardine; and I am well assured that he will take young Ravenswood by the hand, and be his very good lord and kinsman. Why should he not? The Master is an active and stirring young fellow, able to help himself with tongue and hands; and it is such as he that finds friends among their kindred, and not those unarmed and unable Mephibosheths that are sure to be a burden to every one that takes them up. And so, if these Ravenswood cases be called over the coals in the House of Peers, you will find that the Marquis will have a crow to pluck with you.’

‘That would be an evil requital,’ said the Lord Keeper, ‘for my long services to the state, and the ancient respect in which I have held his lordship’s honourable family and person.’

‘Ay, but,’ rejoined the agent of the Marquis, ‘it is in vain to look back on past service and auld respect, my lord; it will be present service and immediate proofs of regard which, in these sliddery times, will be expected by a man like the Marquis.’

The Lord Keeper now saw the full drift of his friend’s argument, but he was too cautious to return any positive answer.

‘He knew not,’ he said, ‘the service which the Lord Marquis could expect from one of his limited abilities, that had not

always stood at his command, still saving and reserving his duty to his king and country.'

Having thus said nothing, while he seemed to say everything, for the exception was calculated to cover whatever he might afterwards think proper to bring under it, Sir William Ashton changed the conversation, nor did he again permit the same topic to be introduced. His guest departed, without having brought the wily old statesman the length of committing himself, or of pledging himself to any future line of conduct, but with the certainty that he had alarmed his fears in a most sensible point, and laid a foundation for future and farther treaty.

When he rendered an account of his negotiation to the Marquis, they both agreed that the Keeper ought not to be permitted to relapse into security, and that he should be plied with new subjects of alarm, especially during the absence of his lady. They were well aware that her proud, vindictive, and predominating spirit would be likely to supply him with the courage in which he was deficient; that she was immovably attached to the party now in power, with whom she maintained a close correspondence and alliance; and that she hated, without fearing, the Ravenswood family (whose more ancient dignity threw discredit on the newly-acquired grandeur of her husband) to such a degree, that she would have perilled the interest of her own house to have the prospect of altogether crushing that of her enemy.

But Lady Ashton was now absent. The business which had long detained her in Edinburgh had afterwards induced her to travel to London, not without the hope that she might contribute her share to disconcert the intrigues of the Marquis at court; for she stood high in favour with the celebrated Sarah Duchess of Marlborough, to whom, in point of character, she bore considerable resemblance. It was necessary to press her husband hard before her return; and, as a preparatory step, the Marquis wrote to the Master of Ravenswood the letter which we rehearsed in a former chapter. It was cautiously worded, so as to leave it in the power of the writer hereafter to take as deep or as slight an interest in the fortunes of his kinsman as the progress of his own schemes might require. But however unwilling, as a statesman, the Marquis might be to commit himself, or assume the character of a patron, while he had nothing to give away, it must be said to his honour that he felt a strong inclination effectually to befriend the

Master of Ravenswood, as well as to use his name as a means of alarming the terrors of the Lord Keeper.

As the messenger who carried this letter was to pass near the house of the Lord Keeper, he had it in direction that, in the village adjoining to the park-gate of the castle, his horse should lose a shoe, and that, while it was replaced by the smith of the place, he should express the utmost regret for the necessary loss of time, and in the vehemence of his impatience give it to be understood that he was bearing a message from the Marquis of A—— to the Master of Ravenswood upon a matter of life and death.

This news, with exaggerations, was speedily carried from various quarters to the ears of the Lord Keeper, and each reporter dwelt upon the extreme impatience of the courier, and the surprising short time in which he had executed his journey. The anxious statesman heard in silence; but in private Lockhard received orders to watch the courier on his return, to waylay him in the village, to ply him with liquor, if possible, and to use all means, fair or foul, to learn the contents of the letter of which he was the bearer. But as this plot had been foreseen, the messenger returned by a different and distant road, and thus escaped the snare that was laid for him.

After he had been in vain expected for some time, Mr. Dingwall had orders to make especial inquiry among his clients of Wolf's Hope, whether such a domestic belonging to the Marquis of A—— had actually arrived at the neighbouring castle. This was easily ascertained; for Caleb had been in the village one morning by five o'clock, to borrow 'twa chappins of ale and a kipper' for the messenger's refreshment, and the poor fellow had been ill for twenty-four hours at Luckie Sma'-trash's, in consequence of dining upon 'saut saumon and sour drink.' So that the existence of a correspondence betwixt the Marquis and his distressed kinsman, which Sir William Ashton had sometimes treated as a bugbear, was proved beyond the possibility of further doubt.

The alarm of the Lord Keeper became very serious; since the Claim of Right, the power of appealing from the decisions of the civil court to the Estates of Parliament, which had formerly been held incompetent, had in many instances been claimed, and in some allowed, and he had no small reason to apprehend the issue, if the English House of Lords should be disposed to act upon an appeal from the Master of Ravenswood 'for remeid in law.' It would resolve into an equitable claim,

and be decided, perhaps, upon the broad principles of justice, which were not quite so favourable to the Lord Keeper as those of strict law. Besides, judging, though most inaccurately, from courts which he had himself known in the unhappy times preceding the Scottish Union, the Keeper might have too much right to think that, in the House to which his lawsuits were to be transferred, the old maxim might prevail in Scotland which was too well recognised in former times — ‘Show me the man, and I’ll show you the law.’ The high and unbiassed character of English judicial proceedings was then little known in Scotland, and the extension of them to that country was one of the most valuable advantages which it gained by the Union. But this was a blessing which the Lord Keeper, who had lived under another system, could not have the means of foreseeing. In the loss of his political consequence, he anticipated the loss of his lawsuit. Meanwhile, every report which reached him served to render the success of the Marquis’s intrigues the more probable, and the Lord Keeper began to think it indispensable that he should look round for some kind of protection against the coming storm. The timidity of his temper induced him to adopt measures of compromise and conciliation. The affair of the wild bull, properly managed, might, he thought, be made to facilitate a personal communication and reconciliation betwixt the Master and himself. He would then learn, if possible, what his own ideas were of the extent of his rights, and the means of enforcing them; and perhaps matters might be brought to a compromise, where one party was wealthy and the other so very poor. A reconciliation with Ravenswood was likely to give him an opportunity to play his own game with the Marquis of A——. ‘And besides,’ said he to himself, ‘it will be an act of generosity to raise up the heir of this distressed family; and if he is to be warmly and effectually befriended by the new government, who knows but my virtue may prove its own reward?’

Thus thought Sir William Ashton, covering with no unusual self-delusion his interested views with a hue of virtue; and having attained this point, his fancy strayed still further. He began to bethink himself, ‘That if Ravenswood was to have a distinguished place of power and trust, and if such a union should sopite the heavier part of his unadjusted claims, there might be worse matches for his daughter Lucy: the Master might be reponed against the attainer. Lord Ravenswood was an ancient title, and the alliance would, in some measure,

legitimate his own possession of the greater part of the Master's spoils, and make the surrender of the rest a subject of less bitter regret.'

With these mingled and multifarious plans occupying his head, the Lord Keeper availed himself of my Lord Bittlebrains' repeated invitation to his residence, and thus came within a very few miles of Wolf's Crag. Here he found the lord of the mansion absent, but was courteously received by the lady, who expected her husband's immediate return. She expressed her particular delight at seeing Miss Ashton, and appointed the hounds to be taken out for the Lord Keeper's special amusement. He readily entered into the proposal, as giving him an opportunity to reconnoitre Wolf's Crag, and perhaps to make some acquaintance with the owner, if he should be tempted from his desolate mansion by the chase. Lockhard had his orders to endeavour on his part to make some acquaintance with the inmates of the castle, and we have seen how he played his part.

The accidental storm did more to further the Lord Keeper's plan of forming a personal acquaintance with young Ravenswood than his most sanguine expectations could have anticipated. His fear of the young nobleman's personal resentment had greatly decreased since he considered him as formidable from his legal claims and the means he might have of enforcing them. But although he thought, not unreasonably, that only desperate circumstances drove men on desperate measures, it was not without a secret terror, which shook his heart within him, that he first felt himself inclosed within the desolate Tower of Wolf's Crag; a place so well fitted, from solitude and strength, to be a scene of violence and vengeance. The stern reception at first given to them by the Master of Ravenswood, and the difficulty he felt in explaining to that injured nobleman what guests were under the shelter of his roof, did not soothe these alarms; so that when Sir William Ashton heard the door of the courtyard shut behind him with violence, the words of Alice rung in his ears, 'That he had drawn on matters too hardly with so fierce a race as those of Ravenswood, and that they would bide their time to be avenged.'

The subsequent frankness of the Master's hospitality, as their acquaintance increased, abated the apprehensions these recollections were calculated to excite; and it did not escape Sir William Ashton, that it was to Lucy's grace and beauty he owed the change in their host's behaviour.



All these thoughts thronged upon him when he took possession of the secret chamber. The iron lamp, the unfurnished apartment, more resembling a prison than a place of ordinary repose, the hoarse and ceaseless sound of the waves rushing against the base of the rock on which the castle was founded, saddened and perplexed his mind. To his own successful machinations, the ruin of the family had been in a great measure owing, but his disposition was crafty, and not cruel; so that actually to witness the desolation and distress he had himself occasioned was as painful to him as it would be to the humane mistress of a family to superintend in person the execution of the lambs and poultry which are killed by her own directions. At the same time, when he thought of the alternative of restoring to Ravenswood a large proportion of his spoils, or of adopting, as an ally and member of his own family, the heir of this impoverished house, he felt as the spider may be supposed to do when his whole web, the intricacies of which had been planned with so much art, is destroyed by the chance sweep of a broom. And then, if he should commit himself too far in this matter, it gave rise to a perilous question, which many a good husband, when under temptation to act as a free agent, has asked himself without being able to return a satisfactory answer — ‘What will my wife — what will Lady Ashton say?’ On the whole, he came at length to the resolution in which minds of a weaker cast so often take refuge. He resolved to watch events, to take advantage of circumstances as they occurred, and regulate his conduct accordingly. In this spirit of temporising policy, he at length composed his mind to rest.

## CHAPTER XVI

A slight note I have about me for you, for the delivery of which you must excuse me. It is an offer that friendship calls upon me to do, and no way offensive to you, since I desire nothing but right upon both sides.

*King and no King.*

WHEN Ravenswood and his guest met in the morning, the gloom of the Master's spirit had in part returned. He, also, had passed a night rather of reflection than of slumber ; and the feelings which he could not but entertain towards Lucy Ashton had to support a severe conflict against those which he had so long nourished against her father. To clasp in friendship the hand of the enemy of his house, to entertain him under his roof, to exchange with him the courtesies and the kindness of domestic familiarity, was a degradation which his proud spirit could not be bent to without a struggle.

But the ice being once broken, the Lord Keeper was resolved it should not have time again to freeze. It had been part of his plan to stun and confuse Ravenswood's ideas, by a complicated and technical statement of the matters which had been in debate betwixt their families, justly thinking that it would be difficult for a youth of his age to follow the expositions of a practical lawyer, concerning actions of compt and reckoning, and of multiplepointings, and adjudications and wadsets, proper and improper, and pointings of the ground, and declarations of the expiry of the legal. 'Thus,' thought Sir William, 'I shall have all the grace of appearing perfectly communicative, while my party will derive very little advantage from anything I may tell him.' He therefore took Ravenswood aside into the deep recess of a window in the hall, and resuming the discourse of the preceding evening, expressed a hope that his young friend would assume some patience, in order to hear him enter into a minute and explanatory detail of those unfortunate circumstances in which his late honourable father had stood at variance with the Lord Keeper. The Master of Ravenswood coloured

highly, but was silent ; and the Lord Keeper, though not greatly approving the sudden heightening of his auditor's complexion, commenced the history of a bond for twenty thousand marks, advanced by his father to the father of Allan Lord Ravenswood, and was proceeding to detail the executorial proceedings by which this large sum had been rendered a *debitum fundi*, when he was interrupted by the Master.

'It is not in this place,' he said, 'that I can hear Sir William Ashton's explanation of the matters in question between us. It is not here, where my father died of a broken heart, that I can with decency or temper investigate the cause of his distress. I might remember that I was a son, and forget the duties of a host. A time, however, there must come, when these things shall be discussed in a place and in a presence where both of us will have equal freedom to speak and to hear.'

'Any time,' the Lord Keeper said, 'any place, was alike to those who sought nothing but justice. Yet it would seem he was, in fairness, entitled to some premonition respecting the grounds upon which the Master proposed to impugn the whole train of legal proceedings, which had been so well and ripely advised in the only courts competent.'

'Sir William Ashton,' answered the Master, with warmth, 'the lands which you now occupy were granted to my remote ancestor for services done with his sword against the English invaders. How they have glided from us by a train of proceedings that seemed to be neither sale, nor mortgage, nor adjudication for debt, but a nondescript and entangled mixture of all these rights ; how annual rent has been accumulated upon principal, and no nook or coign of legal advantage left unoccupied, until our interest in our hereditary property seems to have melted away like an icicle in thaw — all this you understand better than I do. I am willing, however, to suppose, from the frankness of your conduct towards me, that I may in a great measure have mistaken your personal character, and that things may have appeared right and fitting to you, a skilful and practised lawyer, which to my ignorant understanding seem very little short of injustice and gross oppression.'

'And you, my dear Master,' answered Sir William — 'you, permit me to say, have been equally misrepresented to me. I was taught to believe you a fierce, imperious, hot-headed youth, ready, at the slightest provocation, to throw your sword into the scales of justice, and to appeal to those rude and forcible measures from which civil polity has long protected the people

of Scotland. Then, since we were mutually mistaken in each other, why should not the young nobleman be willing to listen to the old lawyer, while, at least, he explains the points of difference betwixt them ?'

'No, my lord,' answered Ravenswood ; 'it is in the House of British Peers,<sup>1</sup> whose honour must be equal to their rank — it is in the court of last resort that we must parley together. The belted lords of Britain, her ancient peers, must decide, if it is their will that a house, not the least noble of their members, shall be stripped of their possessions, the reward of the patriotism of generations, as the pawn of a wretched mechanic becomes forfeit to the usurer the instant the hour of redemption has passed away. If they yield to the grasping severity of the creditor, and to the gnawing usury that eats into our lands as moths into a raiment, it will be of more evil consequence to them and their posterity than to Edgar Ravenswood. I shall still have my sword and my cloak, and can follow the profession of arms wherever a trumpet shall sound.'

As he pronounced these words, in a firm yet melancholy tone, he raised his eyes, and suddenly encountered those of Lucy Ashton, who had stolen unawares on their interview, and observed her looks fastened on them with an expression of enthusiastic interest and admiration, which had wrapt her for a moment beyond the fear of discovery. The noble form and fine features of Ravenswood, fired with the pride of birth and sense of internal dignity, the mellow and expressive tones of his voice, the desolate state of his fortunes, and the indifference with which he seemed to endure and to dare the worst that might befall, rendered him a dangerous object of contemplation for a maiden already too much disposed to dwell upon recollections connected with him. When their eyes encountered each other, both blushed deeply, conscious of some strong internal emotion, and shunned again to meet each other's looks.

Sir William Ashton had, of course, closely watched the expression of their countenances. 'I need fear,' said he internally, 'neither Parliament nor protestation ; I have an effectual mode of reconciling myself with this hot-tempered young fellow, in case he shall become formidable. The present object is, at all events, to avoid committing ourselves. The hook is fixed ; we will not strain the line too soon : it is as well to reserve the privilege of slipping it loose, if we do not find the fish worth landing.'

<sup>1</sup> See Appeal to Parliament. Note 7.

In this selfish and cruel calculation upon the supposed attachment of Ravenswood to Lucy, he was so far from considering the pain he might give to the former, by thus dallying with his affections, that he even did not think upon the risk of involving his own daughter in the perils of an unfortunate passion; as if her predilection, which could not escape his attention, were like the flame of a taper, which might be lighted or extinguished at pleasure. But Providence had prepared a dreadful requital for this keen observer of human passions, who had spent his life in securing advantages to himself by artfully working upon the passions of others.

Caleb Balderstone now came to announce that breakfast was prepared; for in those days of substantial feeding, the relics of the supper amply furnished forth the morning meal. Neither did he forget to present to the Lord Keeper, with great reverence, a morning draught in a large pewter cup, garnished with leaves of parsley and scurvy-grass. He craved pardon, of course, for having omitted to serve it in the great silver standing cup as behoved, being that it was at present in a silversmith's in Edinburgh, for the purpose of being overlaid with gilt.

'In Edinburgh like enough,' said Ravenswood; 'but in what place, or for what purpose, I am afraid neither you nor I know.'

'Aweel!' said Caleb, peevishly, 'there's a man standing at the gate already this morning — that's ae thing that I ken. Does your honour ken whether ye will speak wi' him or no?'

'Does he wish to speak with me, Caleb?'

'Less will not serve him,' said Caleb; 'but ye had best take a visie of him through the wicket before opening the gate; it's no every ane we suld let into this castle.'

'What! do you suppose him to be a messenger come to arrest me for debt?' said Ravenswood.

'A messenger arrest your honour for debt, and in your Castle of Wolf's Crag! Your honour is jesting wi' auld Caleb this morning.' However, he whispered in his ear, as he followed him out, 'I would be loth to do ony decent man a prejudice in your honour's gude opinion; but I would tak twa looks o' that chield before I let him within these walls.'

He was not an officer of the law, however; being no less a person than Captain Craigenfelt, with his nose as red as a comfortable cup of brandy could make it, his laced cocked hat set a little aside upon the top of his black riding periwig, a sword by his side and pistols at his holsters, and his person



arrayed in a riding suit, laid over with tarnished lace — the very moral of one who would say, 'Stand to a true man.'

When the Master had recognised him, he ordered the gates to be opened. 'I suppose,' he said, 'Captain Craigenfelt, there are no such weighty matters betwixt you and me, but may be discussed in this place. I have company in the castle at present, and the terms upon which we last parted must excuse my asking you to make part of them.'

Craigenfelt, although possessing the very perfection of impudence, was somewhat abashed by this unfavourable reception. 'He had no intention,' he said, 'to force himself upon the Master of Ravenswood's hospitality; he was in the honourable service of bearing a message to him from a friend, otherwise the Master of Ravenswood should not have had reason to complain of this intrusion.'

'Let it be short, sir,' said the Master, 'for that will be the best apology. Who is the gentleman who is so fortunate as to have your services as a messenger?'

'My friend, Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw,' answered Craigenfelt, with conscious importance, and that confidence which the acknowledged courage of his principle inspired, 'who conceives himself to have been treated by you with something much short of the respect which he had reason to demand, and therefore is resolved to exact satisfaction. I bring with me,' said he, taking a piece of paper out of his pocket, 'the precise length of his sword; and he requests you will meet him, accompanied by a friend, and equally armed, at any place within a mile of the castle, when I shall give attendance as umpire, or second, on his behoof.'

'Satisfaction! and equal arms!' repeated Ravenswood, who, the reader will recollect, had no reason to suppose he had given the slightest offence to his late inmate; 'upon my word, Captain Craigenfelt, either you have invented the most improbable falsehood that ever came into the mind of such a person, or your morning draught has been somewhat of the strongest. What could persuade Bucklaw to send me such a message?'

'For that, sir,' replied Craigenfelt, 'I am desired to refer you to what, in duty to my friend, I am to term your inhospitality in excluding him from your house, without reasons assigned.'

'It is impossible,' replied the Master; 'he cannot be such a fool as to interpret actual necessity as an insult. Nor do I believe that, knowing my opinion of you, Captain, he would

have employed the services of so slight and inconsiderable a person as yourself upon such an errand, as I certainly could expect no man of honour to act with you in the office of umpire.'

'I slight and inconsiderable!' said Craigenfelt, raising his voice, and laying his hand on his cutlass; 'if it were not that the quarrel of my friend craves the precedence, and is in dependence before my own, I would give you to understand ——'

'I can understand nothing upon your explanation, Captain Craigenfelt. Be satisfied of that, and oblige me with your departure.'

'D——n!' muttered the bully; 'and is this the answer which I am to carry back to an honourable message?'

'Tell the Laird of Bucklaw,' answered Ravenswood, 'if you are really sent by him, that, when he sends me his cause of grievance by a person fitting to carry such an errand betwixt him and me, I will either explain it or maintain it.'

'Then, Master, you will at least cause to be returned to Hayston, by my hands, his property which is remaining in your possession.'

'Whatever property Bucklaw may have left behind him, sir,' replied the Master, 'shall be returned to him by my servant, as you do not show me any credentials from him which entitle you to receive it.'

'Well, Master,' said Captain Craigenfelt, with malice which even his fear of the consequences could not suppress, 'you have this morning done me an egregious wrong and dishonour, but far more to yourself. A castle indeed!' he continued, looking around him; 'why, this is worse than a *coupe-gorge* house, where they receive travellers to plunder them of their property.'

'You insolent rascal,' said the Master, raising his cane, and making a grasp at the Captain's bridle, 'if you do not depart without uttering another syllable, I will baton you to death!'

At the motion of the Master towards him, the bully turned so rapidly round, that with some difficulty he escaped throwing down his horse, whose hoofs struck fire from the 'rocky pavement in every direction. Recovering him, however, with the bridle, he pushed for the gate, and rode sharply back again in the direction of the village.

As Ravenswood turned round to leave the courtyard after this dialogue, he found that the Lord Keeper had descended from the hall, and witnessed, though at a distance prescribed by politeness, his interview with Craigenfelt.

'I have seen,' said the Lord Keeper, 'that gentleman's face,

and at no great distance of time ; his name is Craig — Craig — something, is it not ?’

‘Craigengelt is the fellow’s name,’ said the Master, ‘at least that by which he passes at present.’

‘Craig-in-guilt,’ said Caleb, punning upon the word ‘craig,’ which in Scotch signifies throat ; ‘if he is Craig-in-guilt just now, he is as likely to be Craig-in-peril as any chield I ever saw ; the loon has woodie written on his very visonony, and I wad wager twa and a plack that hemp plaits his cravat yet.’

‘You understand physiognomy, good Mr. Caleb,’ said the Keeper, smiling ; ‘I assure you the gentleman has been near such a consummation before now ; for I most distinctly recollect that, upon occasion of a journey which I made about a fortnight ago to Edinburgh, I saw Mr. Craigengelt, or whatever is his name, undergo a severe examination before the privy council.’

‘Upon what account ?’ said the Master of Ravenswood, with some interest.

The question led immediately to a tale which the Lord Keeper had been very anxious to introduce, when he could find a graceful and fitting opportunity. He took hold of the Master’s arm and led him back towards the hall. ‘The answer to your question,’ he said, ‘though it is a ridiculous business, is only fit for your own ear.’

As they entered the hall, he again took the Master apart into one of the recesses of the window, where it will be easily believed that Miss Ashton did not venture again to intrude upon their conference.

## CHAPTER XVII

Here is a father now,  
Will truck his daughter for a foreign venture,  
Make her the stop-gap to some canker'd feud,  
Or fling her o'er, like Jonah, to the fishes,  
To appease the sea at highest.

*Anonymous.*

THE Lord Keeper opened his discourse with an appearance of unconcern, marking, however, very carefully, the effect of his communication upon young Ravenswood.

'You are aware,' he said, 'my young friend, that suspicion is the natural vice of our unsettled times, and exposes the best and wisest of us to the imposition of artful rascals. If I had been disposed to listen to such the other day, or even if I had been the wily politician which you have been taught to believe me, you, Master of Ravenswood, instead of being at freedom, and with full liberty to solicit and act against me as you please, in defence of what you suppose to be your rights, would have been in the Castle of Edinburgh, or some other state prison; or, if you had escaped that destiny, it must have been by flight to a foreign country, and at the risk of a sentence of fugitation.'

'My Lord Keeper,' said the Master, 'I think you would not jest on such a subject; yet it seems impossible you can be in earnest.'

'Innocence,' said the Lord Keeper, 'is also confident, and sometimes, though very excusably, presumptuously so.'

'I do not understand,' said Ravenswood, 'how a consciousness of innocence can be, in any case, accounted presumptuous.'

'Imprudent, at least, it may be called,' said Sir William Ashton, 'since it is apt to lead us into the mistake of supposing that sufficiently evident to others of which, in fact, we are only conscious ourselves. I have known a rogue, for this very reason, make a better defence than an innocent man could have done in the same circumstances of suspicion. Having no consciousness

of innocence to support him, such a fellow applies himself to all the advantages which the law will afford him, and sometimes — if his counsel be men of talent — succeeds in compelling his judges to receive him as innocent. I remember the celebrated case of Sir Coolie Condiddle of Condiddle, who was tried for theft under trust, of which all the world knew him guilty, and yet was not only acquitted, but lived to sit in judgment on honest folk.'

'Allow me to beg you will return to the point,' said the Master; 'you seemed to say that I had suffered under some suspicion.'

'Suspicion, Master! Ay, truly, and I can show you the proofs of it; if I happen only to have them with me. Here, Lockhard.' His attendant came. 'Fetch me the little private mail with the padlocks, that I recommended to your particular charge, d'ye hear?'

'Yes, my lord.' Lockhard vanished; and the Keeper continued, as if half speaking to himself.

'I think the papers are with me — I think so, for, as I was to be in this country, it was natural for me to bring them with me. I have them, however, at Ravenswood Castle, that I am sure of; so perhaps you might condescend ——'

Here Lockhard entered, and put the leathern scrutoire, or mail-box, into his hands. The Keeper produced one or two papers, respecting the information laid before the privy council concerning the riot, as it was termed, at the funeral of Allan Lord Ravenswood, and the active share he had himself taken in quashing the proceedings against the Master. These documents had been selected with care, so as to irritate the natural curiosity of Ravenswood upon such a subject, without gratifying it, yet to show that Sir William Ashton had acted upon that trying occasion the part of an advocate and peacemaker betwixt him and the jealous authorities of the day. Having furnished his host with such subjects for examination, the Lord Keeper went to the breakfast-table, and entered into light conversation, addressed partly to old Caleb, whose resentment against the usurper of the Castle of Ravenswood began to be softened by his familiarity, and partly to his daughter.

After perusing these papers, the Master of Ravenswood remained for a minute or two with his hand pressed against his brow, in deep and profound meditation. He then again ran his eye hastily over the papers, as if desirous of discovering in them some deep purpose, or some mark of fabrication, which



had escaped him at first perusal. Apparently the second reading confirmed the opinion which had pressed upon him at the first, for he started from the stone bench on which he was sitting, and, going to the Lord Keeper, took his hand, and, strongly pressing it, asked his pardon repeatedly for the injustice he had done him, when it appeared he was experiencing, at his hands, the benefit of protection to his person and vindication to his character.

The statesman received these acknowledgments at first with well-feigned surprise and then with an affectation of frank cordiality. The tears began already to start from Lucy's blue eyes at viewing this unexpected and moving scene. To see the Master, late so haughty and reserved, and whom she had always supposed the injured person, supplicating her father for forgiveness, was a change at once surprising, flattering, and affecting.

'Dry your eyes, Lucy,' said her father; 'why should you weep, because your father, though a lawyer, is discovered to be a fair and honourable man? What have you to thank me for, my dear Master,' he continued, addressing Ravenswood, 'that you would not have done in my case?' "*Suum cuique tribuito*," was the Roman justice, and I learned it when I studied Justinian. Besides, have you not overpaid me a thousand times, in saving the life of this dear child?'

'Yes,' answered the Master, in all the remorse of self-accusation; 'but the little service *I* did was an act of mere brutal instinct; *your* defence of my cause, when you knew how ill I thought of you, and how much I was disposed to be your enemy, was an act of generous, manly, and considerate wisdom.'

'Pshaw!' said the Lord Keeper, 'each of us acted in his own way; you as a gallant soldier, I as an upright judge and privy-councillor. We could not, perhaps, have changed parts; at least I should have made a very sorry tauridor, and you, my good Master, though your cause is so excellent, might have pleaded it perhaps worse yourself than I who acted for you before the council.'

'My generous friend!' said Ravenswood; and with that brief word, which the Keeper had often lavished upon him, but which he himself now pronounced for the first time, he gave to his feudal enemy the full confidence of a haughty but honourable heart. The Master had been remarked among his contemporaries for sense and acuteness, as well as for his

reserved, pertinacious, and irascible character. His prepossessions accordingly, however obstinate, were of a nature to give way before love and gratitude; and the real charms of the daughter, joined to the supposed services of the father, cancelled in his memory the vows of vengeance which he had taken so deeply on the eve of his father's funeral. But they had been heard and registered in the book of fate.

Caleb was present at this extraordinary scene, and he could conceive no other reason for a proceeding so extraordinary than an alliance betwixt the houses, and Ravenswood Castle assigned for the young lady's dowry. As for Lucy, when Ravenswood uttered the most passionate excuses for his ungrateful negligence, she could but smile through her tears, and, as she abandoned her hand to him, assure him, in broken accents, of the delight with which she beheld the complete reconciliation between her father and her deliverer. Even the statesman was moved and affected by the fiery, unreserved, and generous self-abandonment with which the Master of Ravenswood renounced his feudal enmity, and threw himself without hesitation upon his forgiveness. His eyes glistened as he looked upon a couple who were obviously becoming attached, and who seemed made for each other. He thought how high the proud and chivalrous character of Ravenswood might rise under many circumstances in which *he* found himself 'overcrowded,' to use a phrase of Spenser, and kept under, by his brief pedigree, and timidity of disposition. Then his daughter—his favourite child—his constant playmate—seemed formed to live happy in a union with such a commanding spirit as Ravenswood; and even the fine, delicate, fragile form of Lucy Ashton seemed to require the support of the Master's muscular strength and masculine character. And it was not merely during a few minutes that Sir William Ashton looked upon their marriage as a probable and even desirable event, for a full hour intervened ere his imagination was crossed by recollection of the Master's poverty, and the sure displeasure of Lady Ashton. It is certain, that the very unusual flow of kindly feeling with which the Lord Keeper had been thus surprised, was one of the circumstances which gave much tacit encouragement to the attachment between the Master and his daughter, and led both the lovers distinctly to believe that it was a connexion which would be most agreeable to him. He himself was supposed to have admitted this in effect, when, long after the catastrophe of their love, he used to warn

his hearers against permitting their feelings to obtain an ascendancy over their judgment, and affirm, that the greatest misfortune of his life was owing to a very temporary predominance of sensibility over self-interest. It must be owned, if such was the case, he was long and severely punished for an offence of very brief duration.

After some pause, the Lord Keeper resumed the conversation. — ‘In your surprise at finding me an honester man than you expected, you have lost your curiosity about this Craigen-gelt, my good Master; and yet your name was brought in, in the course of that matter too.’

‘The scoundrel!’ said Ravenswood. ‘My connexion with him was of the most temporary nature possible; and yet I was very foolish to hold any communication with him at all. What did he say of me?’

‘Enough,’ said the Keeper, ‘to excite the very loyal terrors of some of our sages, who are for proceeding against men on the mere grounds of suspicion or mercenary information. Some nonsense about your proposing to enter into the service of France, or the Pretender, I don’t recollect which, but which the Marquis of A——, one of your best friends, and another person, whom some call one of your worst and most interested enemies, could not, somehow, be brought to listen to.’

‘I am obliged to my honourable friend; and yet,’ shaking the Lord Keeper’s hand — ‘and yet I am still more obliged to my honourable enemy.’

‘*Inimicus amicissimus*,’ said the Lord Keeper, returning the pressure; ‘but this gentleman — this Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw — I am afraid the poor young man — I heard the fellow mention his name — is under very bad guidance.’

‘He is old enough to govern himself,’ answered the Master.

‘Old enough, perhaps, but scarce wise enough, if he has chosen this fellow for his *fidus Achates*. Why, he lodged an information against him — that is, such a consequence might have ensued from his examination, had we not looked rather at the character of the witness than the tenor of his evidence.’

‘Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw,’ said the Master, ‘is, I believe, a most honourable man, and capable of nothing that is mean or disgraceful.’

‘Capable of much that is unreasonable, though; that you must needs allow, Master. Death will soon put him in possession of a fair estate, if he hath it not already; old Lady

Girnington — an excellent person, excepting that her inveterate ill-nature rendered her intolerable to the whole world — is probably dead by this time. Six heirs portioners have successively died to make her wealthy. I know the estates well; they march<sup>1</sup> with my own — a noble property.'

'I am glad of it,' said Ravenswood, 'and should be more so, were I confident that Bucklaw would change his company and habits with his fortunes. This appearance of Craigengelt, acting in the capacity of his friend, is a most vile augury for his future respectability.'

'He is a bird of evil omen, to be sure,' said the keeper, 'and croaks of jails and gallows-tree. But I see Mr. Caleb grows impatient for our return to breakfast.'

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<sup>1</sup> *i. e.*, They are bounded by my own.

## CHAPTER XVIII

Sir, stay at home and take an old man's counsel ;  
Seek not to bask you by a stranger's hearth ;  
Our own blue smoke is warmer than their fire.  
Domestic food is wholesome, though 't is homely,  
And foreign dainties poisonous, though tasteful.

*The French Courtezan.*

THE Master of Ravenswood took an opportunity to leave his guests to prepare for their departure, while he himself made the brief arrangements necessary previous to his absence from Wolf's Crag for a day or two. It was necessary to communicate with Caleb on this occasion, and he found that faithful servitor in his sooty and ruinous den, greatly delighted with the departure of their visitors, and computing how long, with good management, the provisions which had been unexpended might furnish forth the Master's table. 'He's nae belly god, that's ae blessing ; and Bucklaw's gane, that could have eaten a horse behind the saddle. Crosses or water-purpie, and a bit ait-cake, can serve the Master for breakfast as weel as Caleb. Then for dinner — there's no muckle left on the spule-bane ; it will brander, though — it will brander<sup>1</sup> very well.'

His triumphant calculations were interrupted by the Master, who communicated to him, not without some hesitation, his purpose to ride with the Lord Keeper as far as Ravenswood Castle, and to remain there for a day or two.

'The mercy of Heaven forbid !' said the old serving-man, turning as pale as the table-cloth which he was folding up.

'And why, Caleb ?' said his master — 'why should the mercy of Heaven forbid my returning the Lord Keeper's visit ?'

'Oh, sir !' replied Caleb — 'O, Mr. Edgar ! I am your servant, and it ill becomes me to speak ; but I am an auld servant — have served baith your father and gudesire, and mind to have seen Lord Randal, your great-grandfather, but that was when I was a bairn.'

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<sup>1</sup> Broll.



‘And what of all this, Balderstone?’ said the Master; ‘what can it possibly have to do with my paying some ordinary civility to a neighbour?’

‘O, Mr. Edgar, — that is, my lord!’ answered the butler, ‘your ain conscience tells you it isna for your father’s son to be neighbouring wi’ the like o’ him; it isna for the credit of the family. An he were ance come to terms, and to gie ye back your ain, e’en though ye suld honour his house wi’ your alliance, I suldna say na; for the young ledly is a winsome sweet creature. But keep your ain state wi’ them — I ken the race o’ them weel — they will think the mair o’ ye.’

‘Why, now, you go farther than I do, Caleb,’ said the Master, drowning a certain degree of consciousness in a forced laugh; ‘you are for marrying me into a family that you will not allow me to visit, how’s this? and you look as pale as death besides.’

‘O, sir,’ repeated Caleb again, ‘you would but laugh if I tauld it; but Thomas the Rhymer, whose tongue couldna be fause, spoke the word of your house that will e’en prove ower true if you go to Ravenswood this day. O, that it should e’er have been fulfilled in my time!’

‘And what is it, Caleb?’ said Ravenswood, wishing to soothe the fears of his old servant.

Caleb replied, ‘He had never repeated the lines to living mortal; they were told to him by an auld priest that had been confessor to Lord Allan’s father when the family were Catholic. But mony a time,’ he said, ‘I hae soughed thae dark words ower to mysell, and, well a-day! little did I think of their coming round this day.’

‘Truce with your nonsense, and let me hear the doggerel which has put it into your head,’ said the Master, impatiently.

With a quivering voice, and a cheek pale with apprehension, Caleb faltered out the following lines: —

‘When the last Laird of Ravenswood to Ravenswood shall ride,  
And woo a dead maiden to be his bride,  
He shall stable his steed in the Kelpie’s flow,  
And his name shall be lost for evermoe!’

‘I know the Kelpie’s flow well enough,’ said the Master; ‘I suppose, at least, you mean the quicksand betwixt this tower and Wolf’s Hope; but why any man in his senses should stable a steed there ——’

‘O, never speer ony thing about that, sir — God forbid we should ken what the prophecy means — but just bide you at

hame, and let the strangers ride to Ravenswood by themselves. We have done enough for them; and to do mair would be mair against the credit of the family than in its favour.'

'Well, Caleb,' said the Master, 'I give you the best possible credit for your good advice on this occasion; but as I do not go to Ravenswood to seek a bride, dead or alive, I hope I shall choose a better stable for my horse than the Kelpie's quicksand, and especially as I have always had a particular dread of it since the patrol of dragoons were lost there ten years since. My father and I saw them from the tower struggling against the advancing tide, and they were lost long before any help could reach them.'

'And they deserved it weel, the southern loons!' said Caleb; 'what had they ado capering on our sands, and hindering a wheen honest folk frae bringing on shore a drap brandy? I hae seen them that busy, that I wad hae fired the auld culverin or the demi-saker that's on the south bartizan at them, only I was feared they might burst in the ganging aff.'

Caleb's brain was now fully engaged with abuse of the English soldiery and excisemen, so that his master found no great difficulty in escaping from him and rejoining his guests. All was now ready for their departure; and one of the Lord Keeper's grooms having saddled the Master's steed, they mounted in the courtyard.

Caleb had, with much toil, opened the double doors of the outward gate, and thereat stationed himself, endeavouring, by the reverential, and at the same time consequential, air which he assumed, to supply, by his own gaunt, wasted, and thin person, the absence of a whole baronial establishment of porters, warders, and liveried menials.

The Keeper returned his deep reverence with a cordial farewell, stooping at the same time from his horse, and sliding into the butler's hand the remuneration which in those days was always given by a departing guest to the domestics of the family where he had been entertained. Lucy smiled on the old man with her usual sweetness, bade him adieu, and deposited her guerdon with a grace of action and a gentleness of accent which could not have failed to have won the faithful retainer's heart, but for Thomas the Rhymer, and the successful lawsuit against his master. As it was, he might have adopted the language of the Duke in *As You Like It* —

Thou wouldst have better pleased me with this deed,  
If thou hadst told me of another father.

Ravenswood was at the lady's bridle-rein, encouraging her timidity, and guiding her horse carefully down the rocky path which led to the moor, when one of the servants announced from the rear that Caleb was calling loudly after them, desiring to speak with his master. Ravenswood felt it would look singular to neglect this summons, although inwardly cursing Caleb for his impertinent officiousness; therefore he was compelled to relinquish to Mr. Lockhard the agreeable duty in which he was engaged, and to ride back to the gate of the courtyard. Here he was beginning, somewhat peevishly, to ask Caleb the cause of his clamour, when the good old man exclaimed, 'Whisht, sir! — whisht, and let me speak just ae word that I couldna say afore folk; there (putting into his lord's hand the money he had just received) — there's three gowd pieces; and ye'll want siller up-bye yonder. But stay, whisht now!' for the Master was beginning to exclaim against this transference, 'never say a word, but just see to get them changed in the first town ye ride through, for they are bran new frae the mint, and kenspeckle a wee bit.'

'You forget, Caleb,' said his master, striving to force back the money on his servant, and extricate the bridle from his hold — you forget that I have some gold pieces left of my own. Keep these to yourself, my old friend; and, once more, good day to you. I assure you, I have plenty. You know you have managed that our living should cost us little or nothing.'

'Aweel,' said Caleb, 'these will serve for you another time; but see ye hae enough, for, doubtless, for the credit of the family, there maun be some civility to the servants, and ye maun hae something to mak a show with when they say, "Master, will you bet a broad piece?" Then ye maun tak out your purse, and say, "I carena if I do"; and tak care no to agree on the articles of the wager, and just put up your purse again, and ——'

'This is intolerable, Caleb; I really must be gone.'

'And you will go, then?' said Caleb, loosening his hold upon the Master's cloak, and changing his didactics into a pathetic and mournful tone — 'and you *will* go, for a' I have told you about the prophecy, and the dead bride, and the Kelpie's quicksand? Aweel! a wilful man maun hae his way: he that will to Cupar, maun to Cupar. But pity of your life, sir, if ye be fowling or shooting in the Park, beware of drinking at the Mermaiden's Well —— He's gane! he's down the path

arrow-flight after her? The head is as clean taen aff the Ravenswood family this day as I wad chap the head aff a sybo!’

The old butler looked long after his master, often clearing away the dew as it rose to his eyes, that he might, as long as possible, distinguish his stately form from those of the other horsemen. ‘Close to her bridle-rein — ay, close to her bridle-rein! Wisely saith the holy man, “By this also you may know that woman hath dominion over all men”; and without this lass would not our ruin have been a’thegither fulfilled.’

With a heart fraught with such sad auguries did Caleb return to his necessary duties at Wolf’s Crag, as soon as he could no longer distinguish the object of his anxiety among the group of riders, which diminished in the distance.

In the meantime the party pursued their route joyfully. Having once taken his resolution, the Master of Ravenswood was not of a character to hesitate or pause upon it. He abandoned himself to the pleasure he felt in Miss Ashton’s company, and displayed an assiduous gallantry which approached as nearly to gaiety as the temper of his mind and state of his family permitted. The Lord Keeper was much struck with his depth of observation, and the unusual improvement which he had derived from his studies. Of these accomplishments Sir William Ashton’s profession and habits of society rendered him an excellent judge; and he well knew how to appreciate a quality to which he himself was a total stranger — the brief and decided dauntlessness of the Master of Ravenswood’s disposition, who seemed equally a stranger to doubt and to fear. In his heart the Lord Keeper rejoiced at having conciliated an adversary so formidable, while, with a mixture of pleasure and anxiety, he anticipated the great things his young companion might achieve, were the breath of court-favour to fill his sails.

‘What could she desire,’ he thought, his mind always conjuring up opposition in the person of Lady Ashton to his now prevailing wish — ‘what could a woman desire in a match more than the sopiting of a very dangerous claim, and the alliance of a son-in-law, noble, brave, well-gifted, and highly connected; sure to float whenever the tide sets his way; strong, exactly where we are weak, in pedigree and in the temper of a swordsman? Sure, no reasonable woman would hesitate. But, alas —!’ Here his argument was stopped by the consciousness that Lady Ashton was not always reasonable, in his sense of the word. ‘To prefer some clownish Merse laird to the gallant young nobleman, and to the secure possession of Ravenswood

upon terms of easy compromise — it would be the act of a mad-woman !’

Thus pondered the veteran politician, until they reached Bittlebrains’ House, where it had been previously settled they were to dine and repose themselves, and prosecute their journey in the afternoon.

They were received with an excess of hospitality ; and the most marked attention was offered to the Master of Ravenswood, in particular, by their noble entertainers. The truth was, that Lord Bittlebrains had obtained his peerage by a good deal of plausibility, an art of building up a character for wisdom upon a very trite style of commonplace eloquence, a steady observation of the changes of the times, and the power of rendering certain political services to those who could best reward them. His lady and he, not feeling quite easy under their new honours, to which use had not adapted their feelings, were very desirous to procure the fraternal countenance of those who were born denizens of the regions into which they had been exalted from a lower sphere. The extreme attention which they paid to the Master of Ravenswood had its usual effect in exalting his importance in the eyes of the Lord Keeper, who, although he had a reasonable degree of contempt for Lord Bittlebrains’ general parts, entertained a high opinion of the acuteness of his judgment in all matters of self-interest.

‘I wish Lady Ashton had seen this,’ was his internal reflection ; ‘no man knows so well as Bittlebrains on which side his bread is buttered ; and he fawns on the Master like a beggar’s messan on a cook. And my lady, too, bringing forward her beetle-browed misses to skirl and play upon the virginals, as if she said, “Pick and choose.” They are no more comparable to Lucy than an owl is to a cygnet, and so they may carry their black brows to a farther market.’

The entertainment being ended, our travellers, who had still to measure the longest part of their journey, resumed their horses ; and after the Lord Keeper, the Master, and the domestics had drunk *doch-an-dorroch*, or the stirrup-cup, in the liquors adapted to their various ranks, the cavalcade resumed its progress.

It was dark by the time they entered the avenue of Ravenswood Castle, a long straight line leading directly to the front of the house, flanked with huge elm-trees, which sighed to the night-wind, as if they compassionated the heir of their ancient proprietors, who now returned to their shades in the society,



and almost in the retinue, of their new master. Some feelings of the same kind oppressed the mind of the Master himself. He gradually became silent, and dropped a little behind the lady, at whose bridle-rein he had hitherto waited with such devotion. He well recollected the period when, at the same hour in the evening, he had accompanied his father, as that nobleman left, never again to return to it, the mansion from which he derived his name and title. The extensive front of the old castle, on which he remembered having often looked back, was then 'as black as mourning weed.' The same front now glanced with many lights, some throwing far forward into the night a fixed and stationary blaze, and others hurrying from one window to another, intimating the bustle and busy preparations preceding their arrival, which had been intimated by an avant-courier. The contrast pressed so strongly upon the Master's heart as to awaken some of the sterner feelings with which he had been accustomed to regard the new lord of his paternal domain, and to impress his countenance with an air of severe gravity, when, alighted from his horse, he stood in the hall no longer his own, surrounded by the numerous menials of its present owner.

The Lord Keeper, when about to welcome him with the cordiality which their late intercourse seemed to render proper, became aware of the change, refrained from his purpose, and only intimated the ceremony of reception by a deep reverence to his guest, seeming thus delicately to share the feelings which predominated on his brow.

Two upper domestics, bearing each a huge pair of silver candlesticks, now marshalled the company into a large saloon, or withdrawing-room, where new alterations impressed upon Ravenswood the superior wealth of the present inhabitants of the castle. The mouldering tapestry, which, in his father's time, had half covered the walls of this stately apartment, and half streamed from them in tatters, had given place to a complete finishing of wainscot, the cornice of which, as well as the frames of the various compartments, were ornamented with festoons of flowers and with birds, which, though carved in oak, seemed, such was the art of the chisel, actually to swell their throats and flutter their wings. Several old family portraits of armed heroes of the house of Ravenswood, together with a suit or two of old armour and some military weapons, had given place to those of King William and Queen Mary, of Sir Thomas Hope and Lord Stair, two distinguished Scottish

lawyers. The pictures of the Lord Keeper's father and mother were also to be seen ; the latter, sour, shrewish, and solemn, in her black hood and close pinnars, with a book of devotion in her hand ; the former, exhibiting beneath a black silk Geneva cowl, or skull-cap, which sat as close to the head as if it had been shaven, a pinched, peevish, Puritanical set of features, terminating in a hungry, reddish, peaked beard, forming on the whole a countenance in the expression of which the hypocrite seemed to contend with the miser and the knave. ' And it is to make room for such scarecrows as these,' though Ravenswood, ' that my ancestors have been torn down from the walls which they erected !' He looked at them again, and, as he looked, the recollection of Lucy Ashton, for she had not entered the apartment with them, seemed less lively in his imagination. There were also two or three Dutch drolleries, as the pictures of Ostade and Teniers were then termed, with one good painting of the Italian school. There was, besides, a noble full-length of the Lord Keeper in his robes of office, placed beside his lady in silk and ermine, a haughty beauty, bearing in her looks all the pride of the house of Douglas, from which she was descended. The painter, notwithstanding his skill, overcome by the reality, or, perhaps, from a suppressed sense of humour, had not been able to give the husband on the canvas that air of awful rule and right supremacy which indicates the full possession of domestic authority. It was obvious at the first glance that, despite mace and gold frogs, the Lord Keeper was somewhat henpecked. The floor of this fine saloon was laid with rich carpets, huge fires blazed in the double chimneys, and ten silver sconces, reflecting with their bright plates the lights which they supported, made the whole seem as brilliant as day.

' Would you choose any refreshment, Master ?' said Sir William Ashton, not unwilling to break the awkward silence.

He received no answer, the Master being so busily engaged in marking the various changes which had taken place in the apartment, that he hardly heard the Lord Keeper address him. A repetition of the offer of refreshment, with the addition, that the family meal would be presently ready, compelled his attention, and reminded him that he acted a weak, perhaps even a ridiculous, part in suffering himself to be overcome by the circumstances in which he found himself. He compelled himself, therefore, to enter into conversation with Sir William Ashton, with as much appearance of indifference as he could well command.

‘You will not be surprised, Sir William, that I am interested in the changes you have made for the better in this apartment. In my father’s time, after our misfortunes compelled him to live in retirement, it was little used, except by me as a play-room, when the weather would not permit me to go abroad. In that recess was my little workshop, where I treasured the few carpenters’ tools which old Caleb procured for me, and taught me how to use; there, in yonder corner, under that handsome silver sconce, I kept my fishing-rods and hunting poles, bows and arrows.’

‘I have a young birkie,’ said the Lord Keeper, willing to change the tone of the conversation, ‘of much the same turn. He is never happy save when he is in the field. I wonder he is not here. Here, Lockhard; send William Shaw for Mr. Henry. I suppose he is, as usual, tied to Lucy’s apron-string; that foolish girl, Master, draws the whole family after her at her pleasure.’

‘Even this allusion to his daughter, though artfully thrown out, did not recall Ravenswood from his own topic.

‘We were obliged to leave,’ he said, ‘some armour and portraits in this apartment; may I ask where they have been removed to?’

‘Why,’ answered the Keeper, with some hesitation, ‘the room was fitted up in our absence, and *cedant arma togæ* is the maxim of lawyers, you know: I am afraid it has been here somewhat too literally complied with. I hope — I believe they are safe, I am sure I gave orders; may I hope that when they are recovered, and put in proper order, you will do me the honour to accept them at my hand, as an atonement for their accidental derangement?’

The Master of Ravenswood bowed stiffly, and, with folded arms, again resumed his survey of the room.

Henry, a spoilt boy of fifteen, burst into the room, and ran up to his father. ‘Think of Lucy, papa; she has come home so cross and so fractious, that she will not go down to the stable to see my new pony, that Bob Wilson brought from the Mull of Galloway.’

‘I think you were very unreasonable to ask her,’ said the Keeper.

‘Then you are as cross as she is,’ answered the boy; ‘but when mamma comes home, she’ll claw up both your mittens.’

‘Hush your impertinence, you little forward imp!’ said his father; ‘where is your tutor?’

‘Gone to a wedding in Dunbar ; I hope he ’ll get a haggis to his dinner’ ; and he begun to sing the old Scottish song —

‘There was a haggis in Dunbar,  
Fal de ral, etc.  
Mony better and few waur,  
Fal de ral,’ etc.

‘I am much obliged to Mr. Cordery for his attentions,’ said the Lord Keeper ; ‘and pray who has had the charge of you while I was away, Mr. Henry ?’

‘Norman and Bob Wilson, forbye my own self.’

‘A groom and a gamekeeper, and your own silly self — proper guardians for a young advocate ! Why, you will never know any statutes but those against shooting red-deer, killing salmon, and ——’

‘And speaking of red-game,’ said the young scapegrace, interrupting his father without scruple or hesitation, ‘Norman has shot a buck, and I showed the branches to Lucy, and she says they have but eight tynes ; and she says that you killed a deer with Lord Bittlebrains’ hounds, when you were west away, and, do you know, she says it had ten tynes ; is it true ?’

‘It may have had twenty, Henry, for what I know ; but if you go to that gentleman, he can tell you all about it. Go speak to him, Henry ; it is the Master of Ravenswood.’

While they conversed thus, the father and son were standing by the fire ; and the Master, having walked towards the upper end of the apartment, stood with his back towards them, apparently engaged in examining one of the paintings. The boy ran up to him, and pulled him by the skirt of the coat with the freedom of a spoilt child, saying, ‘I say, sir, if you please to tell me ——’ but when the Master turned round, and Henry saw his face, he became suddenly and totally disconcerted ; walked two or three steps backward, and still gazed on Ravenswood with an air of fear and wonder, which had totally banished from his features their usual expression of pert vivacity.

‘Come to me, young gentleman,’ said the Master, ‘and I will tell you all I know about the hunt.’

‘Go to the gentleman, Henry,’ said his father ; ‘you are not used to be so shy.’

But neither invitation nor exhortation had any effect on the boy. On the contrary, he turned round as soon as he had

completed his survey of the Master, and walking as cautiously as if he had been treading upon eggs, he glided back to his father, and pressed as close to him as possible. Ravenswood, to avoid hearing the dispute betwixt the father and the over-indulged boy, thought it most polite to turn his face once more towards the pictures, and pay no attention to what they said.

‘Why do you not speak to the Master, you little fool?’ said the Lord Keeper.

‘I am afraid,’ said Henry, in a very low tone of voice.

‘Afraid, you goose!’ said his father, giving him a slight shake by the collar. ‘What makes you afraid?’

‘What makes him so like the picture of Sir Malise Ravenswood, then?’ said the boy, whispering.

‘What picture, you natural?’ said his father. ‘I used to think you only a scapegrace, but I believe you will turn out a born idiot.’

‘I tell you, it is the picture of old Malise of Ravenswood, and he is as like it as if he had loupén out of the canvas; and it is up in the old baron’s hall that the maids launder the clothes in; and it has armour, and not a coat like the gentleman; and he has not a beard and whiskers like the picture; and it has another kind of thing about the throat, and no band-strings as he has; and ——’

‘And why should not the gentleman be like his ancestor, you silly boy?’ said the Lord Keeper.

‘Ay; but if he is come to chase us all out of the castle,’ said the boy, ‘and has twenty men at his back in disguise; and is come to say, with a hollow voice, “I bide my time”; and is to kill you on the hearth as Malise did the other man, and whose blood is still to be seen!’

‘Hush! nonsense!’ said the Lord Keeper, not himself much pleased to hear these disagreeable coincidences forced on his notice. ‘Master, here comes Lockhard to say supper is served.’

And, at the same instant, Lucy entered at another door, having changed her dress since her return. The exquisite feminine beauty of her countenance, now shaded only by a profusion of sunny tresses; the sylph-like form, disencumbered of her heavy riding-skirt and mantled in azure silk; the grace of her manner and of her smile, cleared, with a celerity which surprised the Master himself, all the gloomy and unfavourable thoughts which had for some time overclouded his fancy. In those features, so simply sweet, he could trace no alliance with



the pinched visage of the peak-bearded, black-capped Puritan, or his starched, withered spouse, with the craft expressed in the Lord Keeper's countenance, or the haughtiness which predominated in that of his lady; and, while he gazed on Lucy Ashton, she seemed to be an angel descended on earth, unallied to the coarser mortals among whom she deigned to dwell for a season. Such is the power of beauty over a youthful and enthusiastic fancy.

## CHAPTER XIX

I do too ill in this,  
And must not think but that a parent's plaint  
Will move the heavens to pour forth misery  
Upon the head of disobedieney.  
Yet reason tells us, parents are o'erseen,  
When with too strict a rein they do hold in  
Their child's affection, and control that love,  
Which the high powers divine inspire them with.

*The Hog hath lost his Pearl.*

THE feast of Ravenswood Castle was as remarkable for its profusion as that of Wolf's Crag had been for its ill-veiled penury. The Lord Keeper might feel internal pride at the contrast, but he had too much tact to suffer it to appear. On the contrary, he seemed to remember with pleasure what he called Mr. Balderstone's bachelor's meal, and to be rather disgusted than pleased with the display upon his own groaning board.

'We do these things,' he said, 'because others do them; but I was bred a plain man at my father's frugal table, and I should like well would my wife and family permit me to return to my sowens and my poor-man-of-mutton.'<sup>1</sup>

This was a little overstretched. The Master only answered, 'That different ranks — I mean,' said he, correcting himself, 'different degrees of wealth require a different style of house-keeping.'

This dry remark put a stop to farther conversation on the subject, nor is it necessary to record that which was substituted in its place. The evening was spent with freedom, and even cordiality; and Henry had so far overcome his first apprehensions, that he had settled a party for coursing a stag with the representative and living resemblance of grim Sir Malise of Ravenswood, called the Revenger. The next morning was the appointed time. It rose upon active sportsmen and successful sport. The banquet came in course; and a pressing invitation

<sup>1</sup> See Note 8.

to tarry yet another day was given and accepted. This Ravenswood had resolved should be the last of his stay ; but he recollected he had not yet visited the ancient and devoted servant of his house, Old Alice, and it was but kind to dedicate one morning to the gratification of so ancient an adherent.

To visit Alice, therefore, a day was devoted, and Lucy was the Master's guide upon the way. Henry, it is true, accompanied them, and took from their walk the air of a *tête-à-tête*, while, in reality, it was little else, considering the variety of circumstances which occurred to prevent the boy from giving the least attention to what passed between his companions. Now a rook settled on a branch within shot ; anon a hare crossed their path, and Henry and his greyhound went astray in pursuit of it ; then he had to hold a long conversation with the forester, which detained him a while behind his companions ; and again he went to examine the earth of a badger, which carried him on a good way before them.

The conversation betwixt the Master and his sister, meanwhile, took an interesting, and almost a confidential, turn. She could not help mentioning her sense of the pain he must feel in visiting scenes so well known to him, bearing now an aspect so different ; and so gently was her sympathy expressed, that Ravenswood felt it for a moment as a full requital of all his misfortunes. Some such sentiment escaped him, which Lucy heard with more of confusion than displeasure ; and she may be forgiven the imprudence of listening to such language, considering that the situation in which she was placed by her father seemed to authorise Ravenswood to use it. Yet she made an effort to turn the conversation, and she succeeded ; for the Master also had advanced farther than he intended, and his conscience had instantly checked him when he found himself on the verge of speaking love to the daughter of Sir William Ashton.

They now approached the hut of Old Alice, which had of late been rendered more comfortable, and presented an appearance less picturesque, perhaps, but far neater than before. The old woman was on her accustomed seat beneath the weeping birch, basking, with the listless enjoyment of age and infirmity, in the beams of the autumn sun. At the arrival of her visitors she turned her head towards them. 'I hear your step, Miss Ashton,' she said, 'but the gentleman who attends you is not my lord, your father.'

'And why should you think so, Alice ?' said Lucy ; 'or how

is it possible for you to judge so accurately by the sound of a step, on this firm earth, and in the open air?’

‘My hearing, my child, has been sharpened by my blindness, and I can now draw conclusions from the slightest sounds, which formerly reached my ears as unheeded as they now approach yours. Necessity is a stern but an excellent school-mistress, and she that has lost her sight must collect her information from other sources.’

‘Well, you hear a man’s step, I grant it,’ said Lucy; ‘but why, Alice, may it not be my father’s?’

‘The pace of age, my love, is timid and cautious: the foot takes leave of the earth slowly, and is planted down upon it with hesitation; it is the hasty and determined step of youth that I now hear, and—could I give credit to so strange a thought—I should say it was the step of a Ravenswood.’

‘This is indeed,’ said Ravenswood, ‘an acuteness of organ which I could not have credited had I not witnessed it. I am indeed the Master of Ravenswood, Alice—the son of your old master.’

‘You!’ said the old woman, with almost a scream of surprise—‘you the Master of Ravenswood—here—in this place, and thus accompanied! I cannot believe it. Let me pass my old hand over your face, that my touch may bear witness to my ears.’

The Master sate down beside her on the earthen bank, and permitted her to touch his features with her trembling hand.

‘It is indeed!’ she said—‘it is the features as well as the voice of Ravenswood—the high lines of pride, as well as the bold and haughty tone. But what do you here, Master of Ravenswood?—what do you in your enemy’s domain, and in company with his child?’

As Old Alice spoke, her face kindled, as probably that of an ancient feudal vassal might have done in whose presence his youthful liege-lord had showed some symptom of degenerating from the spirit of his ancestors.

‘The Master of Ravenswood,’ said Lucy, who liked not the tone of this expostulation, and was desirous to abridge it, ‘is upon a visit to my father.’

‘Indeed!’ said the old blind woman, in an accent of surprise.

‘I knew,’ continued Lucy, ‘I should do him a pleasure by conducting him to your cottage.’

‘Where, to say the truth, Alice,’ said Ravenswood, ‘I expected a more cordial reception.’

‘It is most wonderful!’ said the old woman, muttering to

herself; 'but the ways of Heaven are not like our ways, and its judgments are brought about by means far beyond our fathoming. Harken, young man,' she said; 'your fathers were implacable, but they were honourable, foes; they sought not to ruin their enemies under the mask of hospitality. What have you to do with Lucy Ashton? why should your steps move in the same footpath with hers? why should your voice sound in the same chord and time with those of Sir William Ashton's daughter? Young man, he who aims at revenge by dishonourable means ——'

'Be silent, woman!' said Ravenswood, sternly; 'is it the devil that prompts your voice? Know that this young lady has not on earth a friend who would venture farther to save her from injury or from insult.'

'And is it even so?' said the old woman, in an altered but melancholy tone, 'then God help you both!'

'Amen! Alice,' said Lucy, who had not comprehended the import of what the blind woman had hinted, 'and send you your senses, Alice, and your good-humour. If you hold this mysterious language, instead of welcoming your friends, they will think of you as other people do.'

'And how do other people think?' said Ravenswood, for he also began to believe the old woman spoke with incoherence.

'They think,' said Henry Ashton, who came up at that moment, and whispered into Ravenswood's ear, 'that she is a witch, that should have been burned with them that suffered at Haddington.'

'What is that you say?' said Alice, turning towards the boy, her sightless visage inflamed with passion; 'that I am a witch, and ought to have suffered with the helpless old wretches who were murdered at Haddington?'

'Hear to that now,' again whispered Henry, 'and me whispering lower than a wren cheeps!'

'If the usurer, and the oppressor, and the grinder of the poor man's face, and the remover of ancient landmarks, and the subverter of ancient houses, were at the same stake with me, I could say, "Light the fire, in God's name!"'

'This is dreadful,' said Lucy; 'I have never seen the poor deserted woman in this state of mind; but age and poverty can ill bear reproach. Come, Henry, we will leave her for the present; she wishes to speak with the Master alone. We will walk homeward, and rest us,' she added, looking at Ravenswood, 'by the Mermaiden's Well.'



‘And Alice,’ said the boy, ‘if you know of any hare that comes through among the deer, and makes them drop their calves out of season, you may tell her, with my compliments to command, that if Norman has not got a silver bullet ready for her, I’ll lend him one of my doublet-buttons on purpose.’

Alice made no answer till she was aware that the sister and brother were out of hearing. She then said to Ravenswood, ‘And you, too, are angry with me for my love? It is just that strangers should be offended, but you, too, are angry!’

‘I am not angry, Alice,’ said the Master, ‘only surprised that you, whose good sense I have heard so often praised, should give way to offensive and unfounded suspicions.’

‘Offensive!’ said Alice. ‘Ay, truth is ever offensive; but, surely, not unfounded.’

‘I tell you, dame, most groundless,’ replied Ravenswood.

‘Then the world has changed its wont, and the Ravenswoods their hereditary temper, and the eyes of Old Alice’s understanding are yet more blind than those of her countenance. When did a Ravenswood seek the house of his enemy but with the purpose of revenge? and hither are you come, Edgar Ravenswood, either in fatal anger or in still more fatal love.’

‘In neither,’ said Ravenswood, ‘I give you mine honour — I mean, I assure you.’

Alice could not see his blushing cheek, but she noticed his hesitation, and that he retracted the pledge which he seemed at first disposed to attach to his denial.

‘It is so, then,’ she said, ‘and therefore she is to tarry by the Mermaiden’s Well! Often has it been called a place fatal to the race of Ravenswood — often has it proved so; but never was it likely to verify old sayings as much as on this day.’

‘You drive me to madness, Alice,’ said Ravenswood; ‘you are more silly and more superstitious than old Balderstone. Are you such a wretched Christian as to suppose I would in the present day levy war against the Ashton family, as was the sanguinary custom in elder times? or do you suppose me so foolish, that I cannot walk by a young lady’s side without plunging headlong in love with her?’

‘My thoughts,’ replied Alice, ‘are my own; and if my mortal sight is closed to objects present with me, it may be I can look with more steadiness into future events. Are you prepared to sit lowest at the board which was once your father’s own, unwillingly, as a connexion and ally of his proud successor? Are you ready to live on his bounty; to follow him in the bye-paths

of intrigue and chicane, which none can better point out to you ; to gnaw the bones of his prey when he has devoured the substance ? Can you say as Sir William Ashton says, think as he thinks, vote as he votes, and call your father's murderer your worshipful father-in-law and revered patron ? Master of Ravenswood, I am the eldest servant of your house, and I would rather see you shrouded and coffined !'

The tumult in Ravenswood's mind was uncommonly great ; she struck upon and awakened a chord which he had for some time successfully silenced. He strode backwards and forwards through the little garden with a hasty pace ; and at length checking himself, and stopping right opposite to Alice, he exclaimed, 'Woman ! on the verge of the grave, dare you urge the son of your master to blood and to revenge ?'

'God forbid !' said Alice, solemnly ; 'and therefore I would have you depart these fatal bounds, where your love, as well as your hatred, threatens sure mischief, or at least disgrace, both to yourself and to others. I would shield, were it in the power of this withered hand, the Ashtons from you, and you from them, and both from their own passions. You can have nothing — ought to have nothing, in common with them. Begone from among them ; and if God has destined vengeance on the oppressor's house, do not you be the instrument.'

'I will think on what you have said, Alice,' said Ravenswood, more composedly. 'I believe you mean truly and faithfully by me, but you urge the freedom of an ancient domestic somewhat too far. But farewell ; and if Heaven afford me better means, I will not fail to contribute to your comfort.'

He attempted to put a piece of gold into her hand, which she refused to receive ; and, in the slight struggle attending his wish to force it upon her, it dropped to the earth.

'Let it remain an instant on the ground,' said Alice, as the Master stooped to raise it ; 'and believe me, that piece of gold is an emblem of her whom you love ; she is as precious, I grant, but you must stoop even to abasement before you can win her. For me, I have as little to do with gold as with earthly passions ; and the best news that the world has in store for me is, that Edgar Ravenswood is a hundred miles distant from the seat of his ancestors, with the determination never again to behold it.'

'Alice,' said the Master, who began to think this earnestness had some more secret cause than arose from anything that the blind woman could have gathered from this casual visit, 'I have heard you praised by my mother for your sense, acuteness,

and fidelity ; you are no fool to start at shadows, or to dread old superstitious saws, like Caleb Balderstone ; tell me distinctly where my danger lies, if you are aware of any which is tending towards me. If I know myself, I am free from all such views respecting Miss Ashton as you impute to me. I have necessary business to settle with Sir William ; that arranged, I shall depart, and with as little wish, as you may easily believe, to return to a place full of melancholy subjects of reflection, as you have to see me here.'

Alice bent her sightless eyes on the ground, and was for some time plunged in deep meditation. 'I will speak the truth,' she said at length, raising up her head — 'I will tell you the source of my apprehensions, whether my candour be for good or for evil. Lucy Ashton loves you, Lord of Ravenswood !'

'It is impossible,' said the Master.

'A thousand circumstances have proved it to me,' replied the blind woman. 'Her thoughts have turned on no one else since you saved her from death, and that my experienced judgment has won from her own conversation. Having told you this — if you are indeed a gentleman and your father's son — you will make it a motive for flying from her presence. Her passion will die like a lamp for want of that the flame should feed upon ; but, if you remain here, her destruction, or yours, or that of both, will be the inevitable consequence of her misplaced attachment. I tell you this secret unwillingly, but it could not have been hid long from your own observation, and it is better you learn it from mine. Depart, Master of Ravenswood ; you have my secret. If you remain an hour under Sir William Ashton's roof without the resolution to marry his daughter, you are a villain ; if with the purpose of allying yourself with him, you are an infatuated and predestined fool.'

So saying, the old blind woman arose, assumed her staff, and, tottering to her hut, entered it and closed the door, leaving Ravenswood to his own reflections.

## CHAPTER XX

Lovelier in her own retired abode  
    . . . than Naiad by the side  
Of Grecian brook — or Lady of the Mere  
Lone sitting by the shores of old romance.

WORDSWORTH.

THE meditations of Ravenswood were of a very mixed complexion. He saw himself at once in the very dilemma which he had for some time felt apprehensive he might be placed in. The pleasure he felt in Lucy's company had indeed approached to fascination, yet it had never altogether surmounted his internal reluctance to wed with the daughter of his father's foe; and even in forgiving Sir William Ashton the injuries which his family had received, and giving him credit for the kind intentions he professed to entertain, he could not bring himself to contemplate as possible an alliance betwixt their houses. Still, he felt that Alice spoke truth, and that his honour now required he should take an instant leave of Ravenswood Castle, or become a suitor of Lucy Ashton. The possibility of being rejected, too, should he make advances to her wealthy and powerful father — to sue for the hand of an Ashton and be refused — this were a consummation too disgraceful. 'I wish her well,' he said to himself, 'and for her sake I forgive the injuries her father has done to my house; but I will never — no, never see her more!'

With one bitter pang he adopted this resolution, just as he came to where two paths parted: the one to the Mermaiden's Fountain, where he knew Lucy waited him, the other leading to the castle by another and more circuitous road. He paused an instant when about to take the latter path, thinking what apology he should make for conduct which must needs seem extraordinary, and had just muttered to himself, 'Sudden news from Edinburgh — any pretext will serve; only let me dally no longer here,' when young Henry came flying up to

him, half out of breath — ‘Master, Master, you must give Lucy your arm back to the castle, for I cannot give her mine; for Norman is waiting for me, and I am to go with him to make his ring-walk, and I would not stay away for a gold Jacobus; and Lucy is afraid to walk home alone, though all the wild nowt have been shot, and so you must come away directly.’

Betwixt two scales equally loaded, a feather’s weight will turn the scale. ‘It is impossible for me to leave the young lady in the wood alone,’ said Ravenswood; ‘to see her once more can be of little consequence, after the frequent meetings we have had. I ought, too, in courtesy, to apprise her of my intention to quit the castle.’

And having thus satisfied himself that he was taking not only a wise, but an absolutely necessary, step, he took the path to the fatal fountain. Henry no sooner saw him on the way to join his sister than he was off like lightning in another direction, to enjoy the society of the forester in their congenial pursuits. Ravenswood, not allowing himself to give a second thought to the propriety of his own conduct, walked with a quick step towards the stream, where he found Lucy seated alone by the ruin.

She sate upon one of the disjointed stones of the ancient fountain, and seemed to watch the progress of its current, as it bubbled forth to daylight, in gay and sparkling profusion, from under the shadow of the ribbed and darksome vault, with which veneration, or perhaps remorse, had canopied its source. To a superstitious eye, Lucy Ashton, folded in her plaided mantle, with her long hair, escaping partly from the snood and falling upon her silver neck, might have suggested the idea of the murdered Nymph of the Fountain. But Ravenswood only saw a female exquisitely beautiful, and rendered yet more so in his eyes — how could it be otherwise? — by the consciousness that she had placed her affections on him. As he gazed on her, he felt his fixed resolution melting like wax in the sun, and hastened, therefore, from his concealment in the neighbouring thicket. She saluted him, but did not arise from the stone on which she was seated.

‘My madcap brother,’ she said, ‘has left me, but I expect him back in a few minutes; for, fortunately, as anything pleases him for a minute, nothing has charms for him much longer.’

Ravenswood did not feel the power of informing Lucy that her brother meditated a distant excursion, and would not



return in haste. He sate himself down on the grass, at some little distance from Miss Ashton, and both were silent for a short space.

'I like this spot,' said Lucy at length, as if she had found the silence embarrassing; 'the bubbling murmur of the clear fountain, the waving of the trees, the profusion of grass and wild-flowers that rise among the ruins, make it like a scene in romance. I think, too, I have heard it is a spot connected with the legendary lore which I love so well.'

'It has been thought,' answered Ravenswood, 'a fatal spot to my family; and I have some reason to term it so, for it was here I first saw Miss Ashton; and it is here I must take my leave of her for ever.'

The blood, which the first part of this speech called into Lucy's cheeks, was speedily expelled by its conclusion.

'To take leave of us, Master!' she exclaimed; 'what can have happened to hurry you away? I know Alice hates—I mean dislikes my father; and I hardly understood her humour to-day, it was so mysterious. But I am certain my father is sincerely grateful for the high service you rendered us. Let me hope that, having won your friendship hardly, we shall not lose it lightly.'

'Lose it, Miss Ashton!' said the Master of Ravenswood. 'No; wherever my fortune calls me—whatever she inflicts upon me—it is your friend—your sincere friend, who acts or suffers. But there is a fate on me, and I must go, or I shall add the ruin of others to my own.'

'Yet do not go from us, Master,' said Lucy; and she laid her hand, in all simplicity and kindness, upon the skirt of his cloak, as if to detain him. 'You shall not part from us. My father is powerful, he has friends that are more so than himself; do not go till you see what his gratitude will do for you. Believe me, he is already labouring in your behalf with the council.'

'It may be so,' said the Master, proudly; 'yet it is not to your father, Miss Ashton, but to my own exertions, that I ought to owe success in the career on which I am about to enter. My preparations are already made—a sword and a cloak, and a bold heart and a determined hand.'

Lucy covered her face with her hands, and the tears, in spite of her, forced their way between her fingers.

'Forgive me,' said Ravenswood, taking her right hand, which, after slight resistance, she yielded to him, still continuing to shade her face with the left—'I am too rude—too rough

—too intractable to deal with any being so soft and gentle as you are. Forget that so stern a vision has crossed your path of life ; and let me pursue mine, sure that I can meet with no worse misfortune after the moment it divides me from your side.'

Lucy wept on, but her tears were less bitter. Each attempt which the Master made to explain his purpose of departure only proved a new evidence of his desire to stay ; until, at length, instead of bidding her farewell, he gave his faith to her for ever, and received her troth in return. The whole passed so suddenly, and arose so much out of the immediate impulse of the moment, that ere the Master of Ravenswood could reflect upon the consequences of the step which he had taken, their lips, as well as their hands, had pledged the sincerity of their affection.

'And now,' he said, after a moment's consideration, 'it is fit I should speak to Sir William Ashton ; he must know of our engagement. Ravenswood must not seem to dwell under his roof to solicit clandestinely the affections of his daughter.'

'You would not speak to my father on the subject ?' said Lucy, doubtingly ; and then added more warmly, 'O do not—do not ! Let your lot in life be determined—your station and purpose ascertained, before you address my father. I am sure he loves you—I think he will consent ; but then my mother——!'

She paused, ashamed to express the doubt she felt how far her father dared to form any positive resolution on this most important subject without the consent of his lady.

'Your mother, my Lucy !' replied Ravenswood. 'She is of the house of Douglas, a house that has intermarried with mine even when its glory and power were at the highest ; what could your mother object to my alliance ?'

'I did not say object,' said Lucy ; 'but she is jealous of her rights, and may claim a mother's title to be consulted in the first instance.'

'Be it so,' replied Ravenswood. 'London is distant, but a letter will reach it and receive an answer within a fortnight ; I will not press on the Lord Keeper for an instant reply to my proposal.'

'But,' hesitated Lucy, 'were it not better to wait—to wait a few weeks ? Were my mother to see you—to know you, I am sure she would approve ; but you are unacquainted personally, and the ancient feud between the families——'

Ravenswood fixed upon her his keen dark eyes, as if he was desirous of penetrating into her very soul.

‘Lucy,’ he said, ‘I have sacrificed to you projects of vengeance long nursed, and sworn to with ceremonies little better than heathen—I sacrificed them to your image, ere I knew the worth which it represented. In the evening which succeeded my poor father’s funeral, I cut a lock from my hair, and, as it consumed in the fire, I swore that my rage and revenge should pursue his enemies, until they shrivelled before me like that scorched-up symbol of annihilation.’

‘It was a deadly sin,’ said Lucy, turning pale, ‘to make a vow so fatal.’

‘I acknowledge it,’ said Ravenswood, ‘and it had been a worse crime to keep it. It was for your sake that I abjured these purposes of vengeance, though I scarce knew that such was the argument by which I was conquered, until I saw you once more, and became conscious of the influence you possessed over me.’

‘And why do you now,’ said Lucy, ‘recall sentiments so terrible—sentiments so inconsistent with those you profess for me—with those your importunity has prevailed on me to acknowledge?’

‘Because,’ said her lover, ‘I would impress on you the price at which I have bought your love—the right I have to expect your constancy. I say not that I have bartered for it the honour of my house, its last remaining possession; but though I say it not, and think it not, I cannot conceal from myself that the world may do both.’

‘If such are your sentiments,’ said Lucy, ‘you have played a cruel game with me. But it is not too late to give it over: take back the faith and troth which you could not plight to me without suffering abatement of honour—let what is passed be as if it had not been—forget me; I will endeavour to forget myself.’

‘You do me injustice,’ said the Master of Ravenswood—‘by all I hold true and honourable, you do me the extremity of injustice; if I mentioned the price at which I have bought your love, it is only to show how much I prize it, to bind our engagement by a still firmer tie, and to show, by what I have done to attain this station in your regard, how much I must suffer should you ever break your faith.’

‘And why, Ravenswood,’ answered Lucy, ‘should you think that possible? Why should you urge me with even the mention of infidelity? Is it because I ask you to delay applying to my father for a little space of time? Bind me by what vows you

please ; if vows are unnecessary to secure constancy, they may yet prevent suspicion.'

Ravenswood pleaded, apologised, and even kneeled, to appease her displeasure ; and Lucy, as placable as she was single-hearted, readily forgave the offence which his doubts had implied. The dispute thus agitated, however, ended by the lovers going through an emblematic ceremony of their troth-plight, of which the vulgar still preserve some traces. They broke betwixt them the thin broad-piece of gold which Alice had refused to receive from Ravenswood.

'And never shall this leave my bosom,' said Lucy, as she hung the piece of gold round her neck, and concealed it with her handkerchief, 'until you, Edgar Ravenswood, ask me to resign it to you ; and, while I wear it, never shall that heart acknowledge another love than yours.'

With like protestations, Ravenswood placed his portion of the coin opposite to his heart. And now, at length, it struck them that time had hurried fast on during this interview, and their absence at the castle would be subject of remark, if not of alarm. As they arose to leave the fountain which had been witness of their mutual engagement, an arrow whistled through the air, and struck a raven perched on the sere branch of an old oak, near to where they had been seated. The bird fluttered a few yards and dropped at the feet of Lucy, whose dress was stained with some spots of its blood.

Miss Ashton was much alarmed, and Ravenswood, surprised and angry, looked everywhere for the marksman, who had given them a proof of his skill as little expected as desired. He was not long of discovering himself, being no other than Henry Ashton, who came running up with a crossbow in his hand.

'I knew I should startle you,' he said ; 'and do you know, you looked so busy that I hoped it would have fallen souse on your heads before you were aware of it. What was the Master saying to you, Lucy ?'

'I was telling your sister what an idle lad you were, keeping us waiting here for you so long,' said Ravenswood, to save Lucy's confusion.

'Waiting for me ! Why, I told you to see Lucy home, and that I was to go to make the ring-walk with old Norman in the Hayberry thicket, and you may be sure that would take a good hour, and we have all the deer's marks and furnishes got, while you were sitting here with Lucy, like a lazy loon.'

‘Well, well, Mr. Henry,’ said Ravenswood; ‘but let us see how you will answer to me for killing the raven. Do you know, the ravens are all under the protection of the Lords of Ravenswood, and to kill one in their presence is such bad luck that it deserves the stab?’

‘And that’s what Norman said,’ replied the boy; ‘he came as far with me as within a flight-shot of you, and he said he never saw a raven sit still so near living folk, and he wished it might be for good luck, for the raven is one of the wildest birds that flies, unless it be a tame one; and so I crept on and on, till I was within threescore yards of him, and then whiz went the bolt, and there he lies, faith! Was it not well shot? and, I daresay, I have not shot in a crossbow — not ten times, maybe.’

‘Admirably shot, indeed,’ said Ravenswood; ‘and you will be a fine marksman if you practise hard.’

‘And that’s what Norman says,’ answered the boy; ‘but I am sure it is not my fault if I do not practise enough; for, of free will, I would do little else, only my father and tutor are angry sometimes, and only Miss Lucy there gives herself airs about my being busy, for all she can sit idle by a well-side the whole day, when she has a handsome young gentleman to prate with. I have known her do so twenty times, if you will believe me.’

The boy looked at his sister as he spoke, and, in the midst of his mischievous chatter, had the sense to see that he was really inflicting pain upon her, though without being able to comprehend the cause or the amount.

‘Come now, Lucy,’ he said, ‘don’t greet; and if I have said anything beside the mark, I’ll deny it again; and what does the Master of Ravenswood care if you had a hundred sweet-hearts? so ne’er put finger in your eye about it.’

The Master of Ravenswood was, for the moment, scarce satisfied with what he heard; yet his good sense naturally regarded it as the chatter of a spoilt boy, who strove to mortify his sister in the point which seemed most accessible for the time. But, although of a temper equally slow in receiving impressions and obstinate in retaining them, the prattle of Henry served to nourish in his mind some vague suspicion that his present engagement might only end in his being exposed, like a conquered enemy in a Roman triumph, a captive attendant on the car of a victor who meditated only the satiating his pride at the expense of the vanquished. There was, we



repeat it, no real ground whatever for such an apprehension, nor could he be said seriously to entertain such for a moment. Indeed, it was impossible to look at the clear blue eye of Lucy Ashton, and entertain the slightest permanent doubt concerning the sincerity of her disposition. Still, however, conscious pride and conscious poverty combined to render a mind suspicious which, in more fortunate circumstances, would have been a stanger to that as well as to every other meanness.

They reached the castle, where Sir William Ashton, who had been alarmed by the length of their stay, met them in the hall.

‘Had Lucy,’ he said, ‘been in any other company than that of one who had shown he had so complete power of protecting her, he confessed he should have been very uneasy, and would have despatched persons in quest of them. But, in the company of the Master of Ravenswood, he knew his daughter had nothing to dread.’

Lucy commenced some apology for their long delay, but, conscience-struck, became confused as she proceeded; and when Ravenswood, coming to her assistance, endeavoured to render the explanation complete and satisfactory, he only involved himself in the same disorder, like one who, endeavouring to extricate his companion from a slough, entangles himself in the same tenacious swamp. It cannot be supposed that the confusion of the two youthful lovers escaped the observation of the subtle lawyer, accustomed, by habit and profession, to trace human nature through all her windings. But it was not his present policy to take any notice of what he observed. He desired to hold the Master of Ravenswood bound, but wished that he himself should remain free; and it did not occur to him that his plan might be defeated by Lucy’s returning the passion which he hoped she might inspire. If she should adopt some romantic feelings towards Ravenswood, in which circumstances, or the positive and absolute opposition of Lady Ashton, might render it unadvisable to indulge her, the Lord Keeper conceived they might be easily superseded and annulled by a journey to Edinburgh, or even to London, a new set of Brussels lace, and the soft whispers of half a dozen lovers, anxious to replace him whom it was convenient she should renounce. This was his provision for the worst view of the case. But, according to its more probable issue, any passing favour she might entertain for the Master of Ravenswood might require encouragement rather than repression.

This seemed the more likely, as he had that very morning, since their departure from the castle, received a letter, the contents of which he hastened to communicate to Ravenswood. A foot-post had arrived with a packet to the Lord Keeper from that friend whom we have already mentioned, who was labouring hard underhand to consolidate a band of patriots, at the head of whom stood Sir William's greatest terror, the active and ambitious Marquis of A——. The success of this convenient friend had been such, that he had obtained from Sir William, not indeed a directly favourable answer, but certainly a most patient hearing. This he had reported to his principal, who had replied by the ancient French adage, '*Château qui parle, et femme qui écoute, l'un et l'autre va se rendre.*' A statesman who hears you propose a change of measures without a reply was, according to the Marquis's opinion, in the situation of the fortress which parleys and the lady who listens, and he resolved to press the siege of the Lord Keeper.

The packet, therefore, contained a letter from his friend and ally, and another from himself, to the Lord Keeper, frankly offering an unceremonious visit. They were crossing the country to go to the southward; the roads were indifferent; the accommodation of the inns as execrable as possible; the Lord Keeper had been long acquainted intimately with one of his correspondents, and, though more slightly known to the Marquis, had yet enough of his lordship's acquaintance to render the visit sufficiently natural, and to shut the mouths of those who might be disposed to impute it to a political intrigue. He instantly accepted the offered visit, determined, however, that he would not pledge himself an inch farther for the furtherance of their views than *reason* (by which he meant his own self-interest) should plainly point out to him as proper.

Two circumstances particularly delighted him — the presence of Ravenswood, and the absence of his own lady. By having the former under his own roof, he conceived he might be able to quash all such hazardous and hostile proceedings as he might otherwise have been engaged in, under the patronage of the Marquis; and Lucy, he foresaw, would make, for his immediate purpose of delay and procrastination, a much better mistress of his family than her mother, who would, he was sure, in some shape or other, contrive to disconcert his political schemes by her proud and implacable temper.

His anxious solicitations that the Master would stay to re-

ceive his kinsman, were, of course, readily complied with, since the *éclaircissement* which had taken place at the Mermaiden's Fountain had removed all wish for sudden departure. Lucy and Lockhard had, therefore, orders to provide all things necessary in their different departments, for receiving the expected guests with a pomp and display of luxury very uncommon in Scotland at that remote period.

## CHAPTER XXI

*Marall.* Sir, the man of honour 's come,  
Newly alighted ——

*Overreach.* In without reply,  
And do as I command. . . .  
Is the loud music I gave order for  
Ready to receive him?

*New Way to pay Old Debts.*

SIR William Ashton, although a man of sense, legal information, and great practical knowledge of the world, had yet some points of character which corresponded better with the timidity of his disposition and the supple arts by which he had risen in the world, than to the degree of eminence which he had attained; as they tended to show an original mediocrity of understanding, however highly it had been cultivated, and a native meanness of disposition, however carefully veiled. He loved the ostentatious display of his wealth, less as a man to whom habit has made it necessary, than as one to whom it is still delightful from its novelty. The most trivial details did not escape him; and Lucy soon learned to watch the flush of scorn which crossed Ravenswood's cheek, when he heard her father gravely arguing with Lockhard, nay, even with the old housekeeper, upon circumstances which, in families of rank, are left uncared for, because it is supposed impossible they can be neglected.

'I could pardon Sir William,' said Ravenswood, one evening after he had left the room, 'some general anxiety upon this occasion, for the Marquis's visit is an honour, and should be received as such; but I am worn out by these miserable minutiae of the buttery, and the larder, and the very hen-coop — they drive me beyond my patience; I would rather endure the poverty of Wolf's Crag than be pestered with the wealth of Ravenswood Castle.'

'And yet,' said Lucy, 'it was by attention to these minutiae that my father acquired the property ——'

‘Which my ancestors sold for lack of it,’ replied Ravenswood. ‘Be it so ; a porter still bears but a burden, though the burden be of gold.’

Lucy sighed ; she perceived too plainly that her lover held in scorn the manners and habits of a father to whom she had long looked up as her best and most partial friend, whose fondness had often consoled her for her mother’s contemptuous harshness.

The lovers soon discovered that they differed upon other and no less important topics. Religion, the mother of peace, was, in those days of discord, so much misconstrued and mistaken, that her rules and forms were the subject of the most opposite opinions and the most hostile animosities. The Lord Keeper, being a Whig, was, of course, a Presbyterian, and had found it convenient, at different periods, to express greater zeal for the kirk than perhaps he really felt. His family, equally of course, were trained under the same institution. Ravenswood, as we know, was a High Churchman, or Episcopalian, and frequently objected to Lucy the fanaticism of some of her own communion, while she intimated, rather than expressed, horror at the latitudinarian principles which she had been taught to think connected with the prelatical form of church government.

Thus, although their mutual affection seemed to increase rather than to be diminished as their characters opened more fully on each other, the feelings of each were mingled with some less agreeable ingredients. Lucy felt a secret awe, amid all her affection for Ravenswood. His soul was of a higher, prouder character than those with whom she had hitherto mixed in intercourse ; his ideas were more fierce and free ; and he contemned many of the opinions which had been inculcated upon her as chiefly demanding her veneration. On the other hand, Ravenswood saw in Lucy a soft and flexible character, which, in his eyes at least, seemed too susceptible of being moulded to any form by those with whom she lived. He felt that his own temper required a partner of a more independent spirit, who could set sail with him on his course of life, resolved as himself to dare indifferently the storm and the favouring breeze. But Lucy was so beautiful, so devoutly attached to him, of a temper so exquisitely soft and kind, that, while he could have wished it were possible to inspire her with a greater degree of firmness and resolution, and while he sometimes became impatient of the extreme fear which she expressed of their



attachment being prematurely discovered, he felt that the softness of a mind, amounting almost to feebleness, rendered her even dearer to him, as a being who had voluntarily clung to him for protection, and made him the arbiter of her fate for weal or woe. His feelings towards her at such moments were those which have been since so beautifully expressed by our immortal Joanna Baillie :

Thou sweetest thing,  
That e'er did fix its lightly-fibred sprays  
To the rude rock, ah ! wouldst thou cling to me ?  
Rough and storm-worn I am ; yet love me as  
Thou truly dost, I will love thee again  
With true and honest heart, though all unmeet  
To be the mate of such sweet gentleness.

Thus the very points in which they differed seemed, in some measure, to ensure the continuance of their mutual affection. If, indeed, they had so fully appreciated each other's character before the burst of passion in which they hastily pledged their faith to each other, Lucy might have feared Ravenswood too much ever to have loved him, and he might have construed her softness and docile temper as imbecility, rendering her unworthy of his regard. But they stood pledged to each other ; and Lucy only feared that her lover's pride might one day teach him to regret his attachment ; Ravenswood, that a mind so ductile as Lucy's might, in absence or difficulties, be induced, by the entreaties or influence of those around her, to renounce the engagement she had formed.

'Do not fear it,' said Lucy, when upon one occasion a hint of such suspicion escaped her lover ; 'the mirrors which receive the reflection of all successive objects are framed of hard materials like glass or steel ; the softer substances, when they receive an impression, retain it undefaced.'

'This is poetry, Lucy,' said Ravenswood ; 'and in poetry there is always fallacy, and sometimes fiction.'

'Believe me, then, once more, in honest prose,' said Lucy, 'that, though I will never wed man without the consent of my parents, yet neither force nor persuasion shall dispose of my hand till you renounce the right I have given you to it.'

The lovers had ample time for such explanations. Henry was now more seldom their companion, being either a most unwilling attendant upon the lessons of his tutor, or a forward volunteer under the instructions of the foresters or grooms. As for the Keeper, his mornings were spent in his study main-

taining correspondences of all kinds, and balancing in his anxious mind the various intelligence which he collected from every quarter concerning the expected change in Scottish politics, and the probable strength of the parties who were about to struggle for power. At other times he busied himself about arranging, and countermanding, and then again arranging, the preparations which he judged necessary for the reception of the Marquis of A——, whose arrival had been twice delayed by some necessary cause of detention.

In the midst of all these various avocations, political and domestic, he seemed not to observe how much his daughter and his guest were thrown into each other's society, and was censured by many of his neighbours, according to the fashion of neighbours in all countries, for suffering such an intimate connexion to take place betwixt two young persons. The only natural explanation was, that he designed them for each other; while, in truth, his only motive was to temporise and procrastinate until he should discover the real extent of the interest which the Marquis took in Ravenswood's affairs, and the power which he was likely to possess of advancing them. Until these points should be made both clear and manifest, the Lord Keeper resolved that he would do nothing to commit himself, either in one shape or other; and, like many cunning persons, he overreached himself deplorably.

Amongst those who had been disposed to censure, with the greatest severity, the conduct of Sir William Ashton, in permitting the prolonged residence of Ravenswood under his roof, and his constant attendance on Miss Ashton, was the new Laird of Girmington, and his faithful squire and bottle-holder, personages formerly well known to us by the names of Hayston and Bucklaw, and his companion Captain Craigengelt. The former had at length succeeded to the extensive property of his long-lived grand-aunt, and to considerable wealth besides, which he had employed in redeeming his paternal acres (by the title appertaining to which he still chose to be designated), notwithstanding Captain Craigengelt had proposed to him a most advantageous mode of vesting the money in Law's scheme, which was just then broached, and offered his services to travel express to Paris for the purpose. But Bucklaw had so far derived wisdom from adversity, that he would listen to no proposal which Craigengelt could invent, which had the slightest tendency to risk his newly-acquired independence. He that once had eat pease-bannocks, drank sour wine, and slept in the

secret chamber at Wolf's Crag, would, he said, prize good cheer and a soft bed as long as he lived, and take special care not to need such hospitality again.

Craigengelt, therefore, found himself disappointed in the first hopes he had entertained of making a good hand of the Laird of Bucklaw. Still, however, he reaped many advantages from his friend's good fortune. Bucklaw, who had never been at all scrupulous in choosing his companions, was accustomed to, and entertained by, a fellow whom he could either laugh with or laugh at as he had a mind, who would take, according to Scottish phrase, 'the bit and the buffet,' understood all sports, whether within or without doors, and, when the laird had a mind for a bottle of wine (no infrequent circumstance), was always ready to save him from the scandal of getting drunk by himself. Upon these terms, Craigengelt was the frequent, almost the constant, inmate of the house of Girnington.

In no time, and under no possibility of circumstances, could good have been derived from such an intimacy, however its bad consequences might be qualified by the thorough knowledge which Bucklaw possessed of his dependant's character, and the high contempt in which he held it. But, as circumstances stood, this evil communication was particularly liable to corrupt what good principles nature had implanted in the patron.

Craigengelt had never forgiven the scorn with which Ravenswood had torn the mask of courage and honesty from his countenance; and to exasperate Bucklaw's resentment against him was the safest mode of revenge that occurred to his cowardly, yet cunning and malignant, disposition.

He brought up on all occasions the story of the challenge which Ravenswood had declined to accept, and endeavoured, by every possible insinuation, to make his patron believe that his honour was concerned in bringing that matter to an issue by a present discussion with Ravenswood. But respecting this subject Bucklaw imposed on him, at length, a peremptory command of silence.

'I think,' he said, 'the Master has treated me unlike a gentleman, and I see no right he had to send me back a cavalier answer when I demanded the satisfaction of one. But he gave me my life once; and, in looking the matter over at present, I put myself but on equal terms with him. Should he cross me again, I shall consider the old accompt as balanced, and his Mastership will do well to look to himself.'

'That he should,' re-echoed Craigengelt; 'for when you are

in practice, Bucklaw, I would bet a magnum you are through him before the third pass.'

'Then you know nothing of the matter,' said Bucklaw, 'and you never saw him fence.'

'And I know nothing of the matter?' said the dependant — 'a good jest, I promise you! And though I never saw Ravenswood fence, have I not been at Monsieur Sagoon's school, who was the first *maître d'armes* at Paris; and have I not been at Signor Poco's at Florence, and Meinherr Durchstossen's at Vienna, and have I not seen all their play?'

'I don't know whether you have or not,' said Bucklaw; 'but what about it, though you had?'

'Only that I will be d—d if ever I saw French, Italian, or High-Dutchman ever make foot, hand, and eye keep time half so well as you, Bucklaw.'

'I believe you lie, Craigie,' said Bucklaw; 'however, I can hold my own, both with single rapier, backsword, sword and dagger, broadsword, or case of falchions — and that's as much as any gentleman need know of the matter.'

'And the double of what ninety-nine out of a hundred know,' said Craigengelt; 'they learn to change a few thrusts with the small sword, and then, forsooth, they understand the noble art of defence! Now, when I was at Rouen in the year 1695, there was a Chevalier de Chapon and I went to the opera, where we found three bits of English birkies —'

'Is it a long story you are going to tell?' said Bucklaw, interrupting him without ceremony.

'Just as you like,' answered the parasite, 'for we made short work of it.'

'Then I like it short,' said Bucklaw. 'Is it serious or merry?'

'Devilish serious, I assure you, and so they found it; for the Chevalier and I —'

'Then I don't like it at all,' said Bucklaw; 'so fill a brimmer of my auld auntie's claret, rest her heart! And, as the Hielandman says, *Skioch doch na skiaill*.'<sup>1</sup>

'That was what tough old Sir Evan Dhu used to say to me when I was out with the metall'd lads in 1689. "Craigengelt," he used to say, "you are as pretty a fellow as ever held steel in his grip, but you have one fault."'

'If he had known you as long as I have done,' said Bucklaw, 'he would have found out some twenty more; but hang long stories, give us your toast, man.'

<sup>1</sup> "Cut a drink with a tale;" equivalent to the English adage of boon companions, "Don't preach over your liquor."

Craigengelt rose, went on tiptoe to the door, peeped out, shut it carefully, came back again, clapped his tarnished gold-laced hat on one side of his head, took his glass in one hand, and touching the hilt of his hanger with the other, named, 'The King over the water.'

'I tell you what it is, Captain Craigengelt,' said Bucklaw; 'I shall keep my mind to myself on these subjects, having too much respect for the memory of my venerable Aunt Girnington to put her lands and tenements in the way of committing treason against established authority. Bring me King James to Edinburgh, Captain, with thirty thousand men at his back, and I'll tell you what I think about his title; but as for running my neck into a noose, and my good broad lands into the statutory penalties, "in that case made and provided," rely upon it, you will find me no such fool. So, when you mean to vapour with your hanger and your dram-cup in support of treasonable toasts, you must find your liquor and company elsewhere.'

'Well, then,' said Craigengelt, 'name the toast yourself, and be it what it like, I'll pledge you, were it a mile to the bottom.'

'And I'll give you a toast that deserves it, my boy,' said Bucklaw; 'what say you to Miss Lucy Ashton?'

'Up with it,' said the Captain, as he tossed off his brimmer, 'the bonniest lass in Lothian! What a pity the old sneekdrawing Whigamore, her father, is about to throw her away upon that rag of pride and beggary, the Master of Ravenswood!'

'That's not quite so clear,' said Bucklaw, in a tone which, though it seemed indifferent, excited his companion's eager curiosity; and not that only, but also his hope of working himself into some sort of confidence, which might make him necessary to his patron, being by no means satisfied to rest on mere sufferance, if he could form by art or industry a more permanent title to his favour.

'I thought,' said he, after a moment's pause, 'that was a settled matter; they are continually together, and nothing else is spoken of betwixt Lammer Law and Traprain.'

'They may say what they please,' replied his patron, 'but I know better; and I'll give you Miss Lucy Ashton's health again, my boy.'

'And I would drink it on my knee,' said Craigengelt, 'if I thought the girl had the spirit to jilt that d--d son of a Spaniard.'

'I am to request you will not use the word "jilt" and Miss Ashton's name together,' said Bucklaw, gravely.



'Jilt, did I say? Discard, my lad of acres — by Jove, I meant to say discard,' replied Craigengelt; 'and I hope she'll discard him like a small card at piquet, and take in the king of hearts, my boy! But yet ——'

'But what?' said his patron.

'But yet I know for certain they are hours together alone, and in the woods and the fields.'

'That's her foolish father's dotage; that will be soon put out of the lass's head, if it ever gets into it,' answered Bucklaw. 'And now fill your glass again, Captain; I am going to make you happy; I am going to let you into a secret — a plot — a noosing plot — only the noose is but typical.'

'A marrying matter?' said Craigengelt, and his jaw fell as he asked the question; for he suspected that matrimony would render his situation at Girnington much more precarious than during the jolly days of his patron's bachelorhood.

'Ay, a marriage, man,' said Bucklaw; 'but wherefore droops thy mighty spirit, and why grow the rubies on thy cheek so pale? The board will have a corner, and the corner will have a trencher, and the trencher will have a glass beside it; and the board-end shall be filled, and the trencher and the glass shall be replenished for thee, if all the petticoats in Lothian had sworn the contrary. What, man! I am not the boy to put myself into leading-strings.'

'So says many an honest fellow,' said Craigengelt, 'and some of my special friends; but, curse me if I know the reason, the women could never bear me, and always contrived to trundle me out of favour before the honeymoon was over.'

'If you could have kept your ground till that was over, you might have made a good year's pension,' said Bucklaw.

'But I never could,' answered the dejected parasite. 'There was my Lord Castle-Cuddy — we were hand and glove: I rode his horses, borrowed money both for him and from him, trained his hawks, and taught him how to lay his bets; and when he took a fancy of marrying, I married him to Katie Glegg, whom I thought myself as sure of as man could be of woman. Egad, she had me out of the house, as if I had run on wheels, within the first fortnight!'

'Well!' replied Bucklaw, 'I think I have nothing of Castle-Cuddy about me, or Lucy of Katie Glegg. But you see the thing will go on whether you like it or no; the only question is, will you be useful?'

'Useful!' exclaimed the Captain, 'and to thee, my lad of

lands, my darling boy, whom I would tramp barefooted through the world for! Name time, place, mode, and circumstances, and see if I will not be useful in all uses that can be devised.'

'Why, then, you must ride two hundred miles for me,' said the patron.

'A thousand, and call them a flea's leap,' answered the dependant; 'I'll cause saddle my horse directly.'

'Better stay till you know where you are to go, and what you are to do,' quoth Bucklaw. 'You know I have a kinswoman in Northumberland, Lady Blenkinsop by name, whose old acquaintance I had the misfortune to lose in the period of my poverty, but the light of whose countenance shone forth upon me when the sun of my prosperity began to arise.'

'D—n all such double-faced jades!' exclaimed Craigengelt, heroically; 'this I will say for John Craigengelt, that he is his friend's friend through good report and bad report, poverty and riches; and you know something of that yourself, Bucklaw.'

'I have not forgot your merits,' said his patron; 'I do remember that, in my extremities, you had a mind to *crimp* me for the service of the French king, or of the Pretender; and, moreover, that you afterwards lent me a score of pieces, when, as I firmly believe, you had heard the news that old Lady Girnington had a touch of the dead palsy. But don't be downcast, John; I believe after all, you like me very well in your way, and it is my misfortune to have no better counsellor at present. To return to this Lady Blenkinsop, you must know, she is a close confederate of Duchess Sarah.'

'What! of Sall Jennings?' exclaimed Craigengelt; 'then she must be a good one.'

'Hold your tongue, and keep your Tory rants to yourself, if it be possible,' said Bucklaw. 'I tell you, that through the Duchess of Marlborough has this Northumbrian cousin of mine become a crony of Lady Ashton, the Keeper's wife, or, I may say, the Lord Keeper's Lady Keeper, and she has favoured Lady Blenkinsop with a visit on her return from London, and is just now at her old mansion-house on the banks of the Wansbeck. Now, sir, as it has been the use and wont of these ladies to consider their husbands as of no importance in the management of their own families, it has been their present pleasure, without consulting Sir William Ashton, to put on the tapis a matrimonial alliance, to be concluded between Lucy Ashton and my own right honourable self, Lady Ashton acting as self-constituted plenipotentiary on the part of

her daughter and husband, and Mother Blenkinsop, equally unaccredited, doing me the honour to be my representative. You may suppose I was a little astonished when I found that a treaty, in which I was so considerably interested, had advanced a good way before I was even consulted.'

'Capot me! if I think that was according to the rules of the game,' said his confidant; 'and pray, what answer did you return?'

'Why, my first thought was to send the treaty to the devil, and the negotiators along with it, for a couple of meddling old women; my next was to laugh very heartily; and my third and last was a settled opinion that the thing was reasonable, and would suit me well enough.'

'Why, I thought you had never seen the wench but once, and then she had her riding-mask on; I am sure you told me so.'

'Ay, but I liked her very well then. And Ravenswood's dirty usage of me — shutting me out of doors to dine with the lackeys, because he had the Lord Keeper, forsooth, and his daughter, to be guests in his beggarly castle of starvation, — d—m me, Craigenelt, if I ever forgive him till I play him as good a trick!'

'No more you should, if you are a lad of mettle,' said Craigenelt, the matter now taking a turn in which he could sympathise; 'and if you carry this wench from him, it will break his heart.'

'That it will not,' said Bucklaw; 'his heart is all steeled over with reason and philosophy, things that you, Craigie, know nothing about more than myself, God help me. But it will break his pride, though, and that's what I'm driving at.'

'Distance me!' said Craigenelt, 'but I know the reason now of his unmannerly behaviour at his old tumble-down tower yonder. Ashamed of your company? — no, no! Gad, he was afraid you would cut in and carry off the girl.'

'Eh! Craigenelt?' said Bucklaw, 'do you really think so? but no, no! he is a devilish deal prettier man than I am.'

'Who — he?' exclaimed the parasite. 'He's as black as the crook; and for his size — he's a tall fellow, to be sure, but give me a light, stout, middle-sized —'

'Plague on thee!' said Bucklaw, interrupting him, 'and on me for listening to you! You would say as much if I were hunch-backed. But as to Ravenswood — he has kept no terms with me, I'll keep none with him; if I *can* win this girl from him, I *will* win her.'

'Win her! 'sblood, you *shall* win her, point, quint, and quatorze, my king of trumps; you shall pique, repique, and capot him.'

'Prithee, stop thy gambling cant for one instant,' said Bucklaw. 'Things have come thus far, that I have entertained the proposal of my kinswoman, agreed to the terms of jointure, amount of fortune, and so forth, and that the affair is to go forward when Lady Ashton comes down, for she takes her daughter and her son in her own hand. Now they want me to send up a confidential person with some writings.'

'By this good wine, I'll ride to the end of the world — the very gates of Jericho, and the judgment-seat of Prester John, for thee!' ejaculated the Captain.

'Why, I believe you would do something for me, and a great deal for yourself. Now, any one could carry the writings; but you will have a little more to do. You must contrive to drop out before my Lady Ashton, just as if it were a matter of little consequence, the residence of Ravenswood at her husband's house, and his close intercourse with Miss Ashton; and you may tell her that all the country talks of a visit from the Marquis of A——, as it is supposed, to make up the match betwixt Ravenswood and her daughter. I should like to hear what she says to all this; for, rat me! if I have any idea of starting for the plate at all if Ravenswood is to win the race, and he has odds against me already.'

'Never a bit; the wrench has too much sense, and in that belief I drink her health a third time; and, were time and place fitting, I would drink it on bended knees, and he that would not pledge me, I would make his guts garter his stockings.'

'Hark ye, Craigengelt; as you are going into the society of women of rank,' said Bucklaw, 'I'll thank you to forget your strange blackguard oaths and "damme's." I'll write to them, though, that you are a blunt, untaught fellow.'

'Ay, ay,' replied Craigengelt — 'a plain, blunt, honest, down-right soldier.'

'Not too honest, nor too much of the soldier neither; but such as thou art, it is my luck to need thee, for I must have spurs put to Lady Ashton's motions.'

'I'll dash them up to the rowel-heads,' said Craigengelt; 'she shall come here at the gallop, like a cow chased by a whole nest of hornets, and her tail twisted over her rump like a corkscrew.'

‘And hear ye, Craigie,’ said Bucklaw; ‘your boots and doublet are good enough to drink in, as the man says in the play, but they are somewhat too greasy for tea-table service; prithee, get thyself a little better rigged out, and here is to pay all charges.’

‘Nay, Bucklaw; on my soul, man, you use me ill. However,’ added Craigengelt, pocketing the money, ‘if you will have me so far indebted to you, I must be conforming.’

‘Well, horse and away!’ said the patron, ‘so soon as you have got your riding livery in trim. You may ride the black crop-ear; and, hark ye, I’ll make you a present of him to boot.’

‘I drink to the good luck of my mission,’ answered the ambassador, ‘in a half-pint bumper.’

‘I thank ye, Craigie, and pledge you; I see nothing against it but the father or the girl taking a tantrum, and I am told the mother can wind them both round her little finger. Take care not to affront her with any of your Jacobite jargon.’

‘O ay, true—she is a Whig, and a friend of old Sall of Marlborough; thank my stars, I can hoist any colours at a pinch! I have fought as hard under John Churchill as ever I did under Dundee or the Duke of Berwick.’

‘I verily believe you, Craigie,’ said the lord of the mansion; ‘but, Craigie, do you, pray, step down to the cellar, and fetch us up a bottle of the Burgundy, 1678; it is in the fourth bin from the right-hand turn. And I say, Craigie, you may fetch up half a dozen whilst you are about it. Egad, we’ll make a night on ’t!’



## CHAPTER XXII

And soon they spied the merry-men green,  
And eke the coach and four.

*Duke upon Duke.*

CRAIGENGELT set forth on his mission so soon as his equipage was complete, prosecuted his journey with all diligence, and accomplished his commission with all the dexterity for which Bucklaw had given him credit. As he arrived with credentials from Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw, he was extremely welcome to both ladies ; and those who are prejudiced in favour of a new acquaintance can, for a time at least, discover excellences in his very faults and perfections in his deficiencies. Although both ladies were accustomed to good society, yet, being predetermined to find out an agreeable and well-behaved gentleman in Mr. Hayston's friend, they succeeded wonderfully in imposing on themselves. It is true that Craigen-gelt was now handsomely dressed, and that was a point of no small consequence. But, independent of outward show, his blackguard impudence of address was construed into honourable bluntness, becoming his supposed military profession ; his hec-toring passed for courage, and his sauciness for wit. Lest, however, any one should think this a violation of probability, we must add, in fairness to the two ladies, that their discernment was greatly blinded, and their favour propitiated, by the opportune arrival of Captain Craigen-gelt in the moment when they were longing for a third hand to make a party at tre-drille, in which, as in all games, whether of chance or skill, that worthy person was a great proficient.

When he found himself established in favour, his next point was how best to use it for the furtherance of his patron's views. He found Lady Ashton prepossessed strongly in favour of the motion which Lady Blenkinsop, partly from regard to her kinsman, partly from the spirit of match-making, had not

hesitated to propose to her ; so that his task was an easy one. Bucklaw, reformed from his prodigality, was just the sort of husband which she desired to have for her Shepherdess of Lammermoor ; and while the marriage gave her an easy fortune, and a respectable country gentleman for her husband, Lady Ashton was of opinion that her destinies would be fully and most favourably accomplished. It so chanced, also, that Bucklaw, among his new acquisitions, had gained the management of a little political interest in a neighbouring county, where the Douglas family originally held large possessions. It was one of the bosom-hopes of Lady Ashton that her eldest son, Sholto, should represent this county in the British Parliament, and she saw this alliance with Bucklaw as a circumstance which might be highly favourable to her wishes.

Craigengelt, who, in his way, by no means wanted sagacity, no sooner discovered in what quarter the wind of Lady Ashton's wishes sate, than he trimmed his course accordingly. 'There was little to prevent Bucklaw himself from sitting for the county ; he must carry the heat — must walk the course. Two cousins german, six more distant kinsmen, his factor and his chamberlain, were all hollow votes ; and the Girnington interest had always carried, betwixt love and fear, about as many more. But Bucklaw cared no more about riding the first horse, and that sort of thing, than he, Craigengelt, did about a game at birkie : it was a pity his interest was not in good guidance.'

All this Lady Ashton drank in with willing and attentive ears, resolving internally to be herself the person who should take the management of the political influence of her destined son-in-law, for the benefit of her eldest-born, Sholto, and all other parties concerned.

When he found her ladyship thus favourably disposed, the Captain proceeded, to use his employer's phrase, to set spurs to her resolution, by hinting at the situation of matters at Ravenswood Castle, the long residence which the heir of that family had made with the Lord Keeper, and the reports which — though he would be d—d ere he gave credit to any of them — had been idly circulated in the neighbourhood. It was not the Captain's cue to appear himself to be uneasy on the subject of these rumours ; but he easily saw from Lady Ashton's flushed cheek, hesitating voice, and flashing eye, that she had caught the alarm which he intended to communicate. She had not heard from her husband so often or so regularly as she thought him bound in duty to have written, and of this very interesting

intelligence concerning his visit to the Tower of Wolf's Crag, and the guest whom, with such cordiality, he had received at Ravenswood Castle, he had suffered his lady to remain altogether ignorant, until she now learned it by the chance information of a stranger. Such concealment approached, in her apprehension, to a misprision, at least, of treason, if not to actual rebellion against her matrimonial authority; and in her inward soul did she vow to take vengeance on the Lord Keeper, as on a subject detected in meditating revolt. Her indignation burned the more fiercely as she found herself obliged to suppress it in presence of Lady Blenkinsop, the kinswoman, and of Craigen-gelt, the confidential friend, of Bucklaw, of whose alliance she now became trebly desirous, since it occurred to her alarmed imagination that her husband might, in his policy or timidity, prefer that of Ravenswood.

The Captain was engineer enough to discover that the train was fired; and therefore heard, in the course of the same day, without the least surprise, that Lady Ashton had resolved to abridge her visit to Lady Blenkinsop, and set forth with the peep of morning on her return to Scotland, using all the despatch which the state of the roads and the mode of travelling would possibly permit.

Unhappy Lord Keeper! little was he aware what a storm was travelling towards him in all the speed with which an old-fashioned coach and six could possibly achieve its journey. He, like Don Gayferos, 'forgot his lady fair and true,' and was only anxious about the expected visit of the Marquis of A——. Soothfast tidings had assured him that this nobleman was at length, and without fail, to honour his castle at one in the afternoon, being a late dinner-hour; and much was the bustle in consequence of the annunciation. The Lord Keeper traversed the chambers, held consultation with the butler in the cellars, and even ventured, at the risk of a *démêlé* with a cook of a spirit lofty enough to scorn the admonitions of Lady Ashton herself, to peep into the kitchen. Satisfied, at length, that everything was in as active a train of preparation as was possible, he summoned Ravenswood and his daughter to walk upon the terrace, for the purpose of watching, from that commanding position, the earliest symptoms of his lordship's approach. For this purpose, with slow and idle step, he paraded the terrace, which, flanked with a heavy stone battlement, stretched in front of the castle upon a level with the first story; while visitors found access to the court by a projecting gateway, the bartizan

or flat-leaded roof of which was accessible from the terrace by an easy flight of low and broad steps. The whole bore a resemblance partly to a castle, partly to a nobleman's seat; and though calculated, in some respects, for defence, evinced that it had been constructed under a sense of the power and security of the ancient Lords of Ravenswood.

This pleasant walk commanded a beautiful and extensive view. But what was most to our present purpose, there were seen from the terrace two roads, one leading from the east, and one from the westward, which, crossing a ridge opposed to the eminence on which the castle stood, at different angles, gradually approached each other, until they joined not far from the gate of the avenue. It was to the westward approach that the Lord Keeper, from a sort of fidgeting anxiety, his daughter, from complaisance to him, and Ravenswood, though feeling some symptoms of internal impatience, out of complaisance to his daughter, directed their eyes to see the precursors of the Marquis's approach.

These were not long of presenting themselves. Two running footmen, dressed in white, with black jockey-caps, and long staffs in their hands, headed the train; and such was their agility, that they found no difficulty in keeping the necessary advance, which the etiquette of their station required, before the carriage and horsemen. Onward they came at a long swinging trot, arguing unwearied speed in their long-breathed calling. Such running footmen are often alluded to in old plays (I would particularly instance Middleton's *Mad World, my Masters*), and perhaps may be still remembered by some old persons in Scotland, as part of the retinue of the ancient nobility when travelling in full ceremony.<sup>1</sup> Behind these glancing meteors, who footed it as if the Avenger of Blood had been behind them, came a cloud of dust, raised by riders who preceded, attended, or followed the state-carriage of the Marquis.

The privilege of nobility, in those days, had something in it impressive on the imagination. The dresses and liveries and number of their attendants, their style of travelling, the imposing, and almost warlike, air of the armed men who surrounded them, placed them far above the laird, who travelled with his brace of footmen; and as to rivalry from the mercantile part of the community, these would as soon have thought of imitating the state equipage of the Sovereign. At present it is different; and I myself, Peter Pattieson, in a late journey to

<sup>1</sup> See Note 9.

Edinburgh, had the honour, in the mail-coach phrase, to 'change a leg' with a peer of the realm. It was not so in the days of which I write; and the Marquis's approach, so long expected in vain, now took place in the full pomp of ancient aristocracy. Sir William Ashton was so much interested in what he beheld, and in considering the ceremonial of reception, in case any circumstance had been omitted, that he scarce heard his son Henry exclaim, 'There is another coach and six coming down the east road, papa; can they both belong to the Marquis of A——?'

At length, when the youngster had fairly compelled his attention by pulling his sleeve,

He turned his eyes, and, as he turn'd, survey'd  
An awful vision.

Sure enough, another coach and six, with four servants or outriders in attendance, was descending the hill from the eastward, at such a pace as made it doubtful which of the carriages thus approaching from different quarters would first reach the gate at the extremity of the avenue. The one coach was green, the other blue; and not the green and blue chariots in the circus of Rome or Constantinople excited more turmoil among the citizens than the double apparition occasioned in the mind of the Lord Keeper.

We all remember the terrible exclamation of the dying profligate, when a friend, to destroy what he supposed the hypochondriac idea of a spectre appearing in a certain shape at a given hour, placed before him a person dressed up in the manner he described. '*Mon Dieu!*' said the expiring sinner, who, it seems, saw both the real and polygraphic apparition, '*il y en a deux!*' The surprise of the Lord Keeper was scarcely less unpleasant at the duplication of the expected arrival; his mind misgave him strangely. There was no neighbour who would have approached so unceremoniously, at a time when ceremony was held in such respect. It must be Lady Ashton, said his conscience, and followed up the hint with an anxious anticipation of the purpose of her sudden and unannounced return. He felt that he was caught 'in the manner.' That the company in which she had so unluckily surprised him was likely to be highly distasteful to her, there was no question; and the only hope which remained for him was her high sense of dignified propriety, which, he trusted, might prevent a public explosion. But so active were his doubts and fears as altogether



to derange his purposed ceremonial for the reception of the Marquis.

These feelings of apprehension were not confined to Sir William Ashton. 'It is my mother—it is my mother!' said Lucy, turning as pale as ashes, and clasping her hands together as she looked at Ravenswood.

'And if it be Lady Ashton,' said her lover to her in a low tone, 'what can be the occasion of such alarm? Surely the return of a lady to the family from which she has been so long absent should excite other sensations than those of fear and dismay.'

'You do not know my mother,' said Miss Ashton, in a tone almost breathless with terror; 'what will she say when she sees you in this place!'

'My stay has been too long,' said Ravenswood, somewhat haughtily, 'if her displeasure at my presence is likely to be so formidable. My dear Lucy,' he resumed, in a tone of soothing encouragement, 'you are too childishly afraid of Lady Ashton; she is a woman of family—a lady of fashion—a person who must know the world, and what is due to her husband and her husband's guests.'

Lucy shook her head; and, as if her mother, still at the distance of half a mile, could have seen and scrutinised her deportment, she withdrew herself from beside Ravenswood, and, taking her brother Henry's arm, led him to a different part of the terrace. The Keeper also shuffled down towards the portal of the great gate, without inviting Ravenswood to accompany him; and thus he remained standing alone on the terrace, deserted and shunned, as it were, by the inhabitants of the mansion.

This suited not the mood of one who was proud in proportion to his poverty, and who thought that, in sacrificing his deep-rooted resentments so far as to become Sir William Ashton's guest, he conferred a favour, and received none. 'I can forgive Lucy,' he said to himself; 'she is young, timid, and conscious of an important engagement assumed without her mother's sanction; yet she should remember with whom it has been assumed, and leave me no reason to suspect that she is ashamed of her choice. For the Keeper, sense, spirit, and expression seem to have left his face and manner since he had the first glimpse of Lady Ashton's carriage. I must watch how this is to end; and, if they give me reason to think myself an unwelcome guest, my visit is soon abridged.'

With these suspicions floating on his mind, he left the terrace,

and, walking towards the stables of the castle, gave directions that his horse should be kept in readiness, in case he should have occasion to ride abroad.

In the meanwhile, the drivers of the two carriages, the approach of which had occasioned so much dismay at the castle, had become aware of each other's presence, as they approached upon different lines to the head of the avenue, as a common centre. Lady Ashton's driver and postilions instantly received orders to get foremost, if possible, her ladyship being desirous of despatching her first interview with her husband before the arrival of these guests, whoever they might happen to be. On the other hand, the coachman of the Marquis, conscious of his own dignity and that of his master, and observing the rival charioteer was mending his pace, resolved, like a true brother of the whip, whether ancient or modern, to vindicate his right of precedence. So that, to increase the confusion of the Lord Keeper's understanding, he saw the short time which remained for consideration abridged by the haste of the contending coachmen, who, fixing their eyes sternly on each other, and applying the lash smartly to their horses, began to thunder down the descent with emulous rapidity, while the horsemen who attended them were forced to put on to a hand-gallop.

Sir William's only chance now remaining was the possibility of an overturn, and that his lady or visitor might break their necks. I am not aware that he formed any distinct wish on the subject, but I have no reason to think that his grief in either case would have been altogether inconsolable. This chance, however, also disappeared; for Lady Ashton, though insensible to fear, began to see the ridicule of running a race with a visitor of distinction, the goal being the portal of her own castle, and commanded her coachman, as they approached the avenue, to slacken his pace, and allow precedence to the stranger's equipage; a command which he gladly obeyed, as coming in time to save his honour, the horses of the Marquis's carriage being better, or, at least, fresher than his own. He restrained his pace, therefore, and suffered the green coach to enter the avenue, with all its retinue, which pass it occupied with the speed of a whirlwind. The Marquis's laced charioteer no sooner found the *pas d'avance* was granted to him than he resumed a more deliberate pace, at which he advanced under the embowering shade of the lofty elms, surrounded by all the attendants; while the carriage of Lady Ashton followed, still more slowly, at some distance.

In the front of the castle, and beneath the portal which admitted guests into the inner court, stood Sir William Ashton, much perplexed in mind, his younger son and daughter beside him, and in their rear a train of attendants of various ranks, in and out of livery. The nobility and gentry of Scotland, at this period, were remarkable even to extravagance for the number of their servants, whose services were easily purchased in a country where men were numerous beyond proportion to the means of employing them.

The manners of a man trained like Sir William Ashton are too much at his command to remain long disconcerted with the most adverse concurrence of circumstances. He received the Marquis, as he alighted from his equipage, with the usual compliments of welcome; and, as he ushered him into the great hall, expressed his hope that his journey had been pleasant. The Marquis was a tall, well-made man, with a thoughtful and intelligent countenance, and an eye in which the fire of ambition had for some years replaced the vivacity of youth; a bold, proud expression of countenance, yet chastened by habitual caution, and the desire which, as the head of a party, he necessarily entertained of acquiring popularity. He answered with courtesy the courteous inquiries of the Lord Keeper, and was formally presented to Miss Ashton, in the course of which ceremony the Lord Keeper gave the first symptom of what was chiefly occupying his mind, by introducing his daughter as 'his wife, Lady Ashton.'

Lucy blushed; the Marquis looked surprised at the extremely juvenile appearance of his hostess, and the Lord Keeper with difficulty rallied himself so far as to explain. 'I should have said my daughter, my lord; but the truth is, that I saw Lady Ashton's carriage enter the avenue shortly after your lordship's, and ——'

'Make no apology, my lord,' replied his noble guest; 'let me entreat you will wait on your lady, and leave me to cultivate Miss Ashton's acquaintance. I am shocked my people should have taken precedence of our hostess at her own gate; but your lordship is aware that I supposed Lady Ashton was still in the south. Permit me to beseech you will waive ceremony, and hasten to welcome her.'

This was precisely what the Lord Keeper longed to do; and he instantly profited by his lordship's obliging permission. To see Lady Ashton, and encounter the first burst of her displeasure in private, might prepare her, in some degree, to receive her

unwelcome guests with due decorum. As her carriage, therefore, stopped, the arm of the attentive husband was ready to assist Lady Ashton in dismounting. Looking as if she saw him not, she put his arm aside, and requested that of Captain Craigenfelt, who stood by the coach with his laced hat under his arm, having acted as *cavalière servente*, or squire in attendance, during the journey. Taking hold of this respectable person's arm as if to support her, Lady Ashton traversed the court, uttering a word or two by way of direction to the servants, but not one to Sir William, who in vain endeavoured to attract her attention, as he rather followed than accompanied her into the hall, in which they found the Marquis in close conversation with the Master of Ravenswood. Lucy had taken the first opportunity of escaping. There was embarrassment on every countenance except that of the Marquis of A——; for even Craigenfelt's impudence was hardly able to veil his fear of Ravenswood, and the rest felt the awkwardness of the position in which they were thus unexpectedly placed.

After waiting a moment to be presented by Sir William Ashton, the Marquis resolved to introduce himself. 'The Lord Keeper,' he said, bowing to Lady Ashton, 'has just introduced to me his daughter as his wife; he might very easily present Lady Ashton as his daughter, so little does she differ from what I remember her some years since. Will she permit an old acquaintance the privilege of a guest?'

He saluted the lady with too good a grace to apprehend a repulse, and then proceeded — 'This, Lady Ashton, is a peace-making visit, and therefore I presume to introduce my cousin, the young Master of Ravenswood, to your favourable notice.'

Lady Ashton could not choose but courtesy; but there was in her obeisance an air of haughtiness approaching to contemptuous repulse. Ravenswood could not choose but bow; but his manner returned the scorn with which he had been greeted.

'Allow me,' she said, 'to present to your lordship *my* friend.' Craigenfelt, with the forward impudence which men of his cast mistake for ease, made a sliding bow to the Marquis, which he graced by a flourish of his gold-laced hat. The lady turned to her husband. 'You and I, Sir William,' she said, and these were the first words she had addressed to him, 'have acquired new acquaintances since we parted; let me introduce the acquisition I have made to mine — Captain Craigenfelt.'

Another bow, and another flourish of the gold-laced hat, which was returned by the Lord Keeper without intimation of

former recognition, and with that sort of anxious readiness which intimated his wish that peace and amnesty should take place betwixt the contending parties, including the auxiliaries on both sides. 'Let me introduce you to the Master of Ravenswood,' said he to Captain Craigengelt, following up the same amicable system.

But the Master drew up his tall form to the full extent of his height, and without so much as looking towards the person thus introduced to him, he said, in a marked tone, 'Captain Craigengelt and I are already perfectly well acquainted with each other.'

'Perfectly — perfectly,' replied the Captain, in a mumbling tone, like that of a double echo, and with a flourish of his hat, the circumference of which was greatly abridged, compared with those which had so cordially graced his introduction to the Marquis and the Lord Keeper.

Lockhard, followed by three menials, now entered with wine and refreshments, which it was the fashion to offer as a whet before dinner; and when they were placed before the guests, Lady Ashton made an apology for withdrawing her husband from them for some minutes upon business of special import. The Marquis, of course, requested her ladyship would lay herself under no restraint; and Craigengelt, bolting with speed a second glass of racy canary, hastened to leave the room, feeling no great pleasure in the prospect of being left alone with the Marquis of A—— and the Master of Ravenswood; the presence of the former holding him in awe, and that of the latter in bodily terror.

Some arrangements about his horse and baggage formed the pretext for his sudden retreat, in which he persevered, although Lady Ashton gave Lockhard orders to be careful most particularly to accommodate Captain Craigengelt with all the attendance which he could possibly require. The Marquis and the Master of Ravenswood were thus left to communicate to each other their remarks upon the reception which they had met with, while Lady Ashton led the way, and her lord followed somewhat like a condemned criminal, to her ladyship's dressing-room.

So soon as the spouses had both entered, her ladyship gave way to that fierce audacity of temper which she had with difficulty suppressed, out of respect to appearances. She shut the door behind the alarmed Lord Keeper, took the key out of the spring-lock, and with a countenance which years had not bereft of its haughty charms, and eyes which spoke at once resolution and resentment, she addressed her astounded husband



in these words: 'My lord, I am not greatly surprised at the connexions you have been pleased to form during my absence, they are entirely in conformity with your birth and breeding; and if I did expect anything else, I heartily own my error, and that I merit, by having done so, the disappointment you had prepared for me.'

'My dear Lady Ashton — my dear Eleanor,' said the Lord Keeper, 'listen to reason for a moment, and I will convince you I have acted with all the regard due to the dignity, as well as the interest, of my family.'

'To the interest of *your* family I conceive you perfectly capable of attending,' returned the indignant lady, 'and even to the dignity of your own family also, as far as it requires any looking after. But as mine happens to be inextricably involved with it, you will excuse me if I choose to give my own attention so far as that is concerned.'

'What would you have, Lady Ashton?' said the husband. 'What is it that displeases you? Why is it that, on your return after so long an absence, I am arraigned in this manner?'

'Ask your own conscience, Sir William, what has prompted you to become a renegade to your political party and opinions, and led you, for what I know, to be on the point of marrying your only daughter to a beggarly Jacobite bankrupt, the inveterate enemy of your family to the boot.'

'Why, what, in the name of common sense and civility, would you have me do, madam?' answered her husband. 'Is it possible for me, with ordinary decency, to turn a young gentleman out of my house, who saved my daughter's life and my own, but the other morning, as it were?'

'Saved your life! I have heard of that story,' said the lady. 'The Lord Keeper was scared by a dun cow, and he takes the young fellow who killed her for Guy of Warwick: any butcher from Haddington may soon have an equal claim on your hospitality.'

'Lady Ashton,' stammered the Keeper, 'this is intolerable; and when I am desirous, too, to make you easy by any sacrifice, if you would but tell me what you would be at.'

'Go down to your guests,' said the imperious dame, 'and make your apology to Ravenswood, that the arrival of Captain Craigengelt and some other friends renders it impossible for you to offer him lodgings at the castle. I expect young Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw.'

'Good heavens, madam!' ejaculated her husband. 'Ravens-

wood to give place to Craigengelt, a common gambler and an informer! It was all I could do to forbear desiring the fellow to get out of my house, and I was much surprised to see him in your ladyship's train.'

'Since you saw him there, you might be well assured,' answered this meek helpmate, 'that he was proper society. As to this Ravenswood, he only meets with the treatment which, to my certain knowledge, he gave to a much-valued friend of mine, who had the misfortune to be his guest some time since. But take your resolution; for, if Ravenswood does not quit the house, I will.'

Sir William Ashton paced up and down the apartment in the most distressing agitation; fear, and shame, and anger contending against the habitual deference he was in the use of rendering to his lady. At length it ended, as is usual with timid minds placed in such circumstances, in his adopting a *mezzo termine* — a middle measure.

'I tell you frankly, madam, I neither can nor will be guilty of the incivility you propose to the Master of Ravenswood; he has not deserved it at my hand. If you will be so unreasonable as to insult a man of quality under your own roof, I cannot prevent you; but I will not at least be the agent in such a preposterous proceeding.'

'You will not?' asked the lady.

'No, by heavens, madam!' her husband replied; 'ask me anything congruent with common decency, as to drop his acquaintance by degrees, or the like; but to bid him leave my house is what I will not and cannot consent to.'

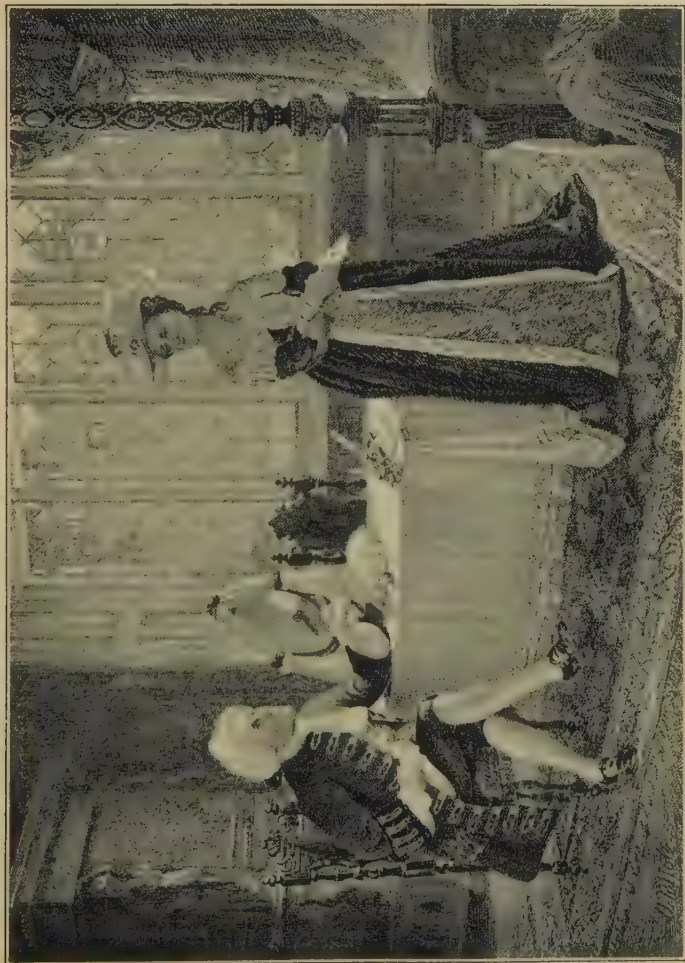
'Then the task of supporting the honour of the family will fall on me, as it has often done before,' said the lady.

She sat down, and hastily wrote a few lines. The Lord Keeper made another effort to prevent her taking a step so decisive, just as she opened the door to call her female attendant from the ante-room. 'Think what you are doing, Lady Ashton: you are making a mortal enemy of a young man who is like to have the means of harming us ——'

'Did you ever know a Douglas who feared an enemy?' answered the lady, contemptuously.

'Ay, but he is as proud and vindictive as a hundred Douglasses, and a hundred devils to boot. Think of it for a night only.'

'Not for another moment,' answered the lady. 'Here, Mrs. Patullo, give this billet to young Ravenswood.'



"THINK WHAT YOU ARE DOING, LADY ASHTON: YOU ARE MAKING A MORTAL ENEMY."

From a painting by Hole.



‘To the Master, madam?’ said Mrs. Patullo.

‘Ay, to the Master, if you call him so.’

‘I wash my hands of it entirely,’ said the Keeper; ‘and I shall go down into the garden and see that Jardine gathers the winter fruit for the desert.’

‘Do so,’ said the lady, looking after him with glances of infinite contempt; ‘and thank God that you leave one behind you as fit to protect the honour of the family as you are to look after pippins and pears.’

The Lord Keeper remained long enough in the garden to give her ladyship’s mind time to explode, and to let, as he thought, at least the first violence of Ravenswood’s displeasure blow over. When he entered the hall, he found the Marquis of A—— giving orders to some of his attendants. He seemed in high displeasure, and interrupted an apology which Sir William had commenced for having left his lordship alone.

‘I presume, Sir William, you are no stranger to this singular billet with which *my* kinsman of Ravenswood (an emphasis on the word ‘my’) has been favoured by your lady; and, of course, that you are prepared to receive my adieus. My kinsman is already gone, having thought it unnecessary to offer any on his part, since all former civilities had been cancelled by this singular insult.’

‘I protest, my lord,’ said Sir William, holding the billet in his hand, ‘I am not privy to the contents of this letter. I know Lady Ashton is a warm-tempered and prejudiced woman, and I am sincerely sorry for any offence that has been given or taken; but I hope your lordship will consider that a lady——’

‘Should bear herself towards persons of a certain rank with the breeding of one,’ said the Marquis, completing the half-uttered sentence.

‘True, my lord,’ said the unfortunate Keeper; ‘but Lady Ashton is still a woman——’

‘And as such, methinks,’ said the Marquis, again interrupting him, ‘should be taught the duties which correspond to her station. But here she comes, and I will learn from her own mouth the reason of this extraordinary and unexpected affront offered to my near relation, while both he and I were her ladyship’s guests.’

Lady Ashton accordingly entered the apartment at this moment. Her dispute with Sir William, and a subsequent interview with her daughter, had not prevented her from attending to the duties of her toilette. She appeared in full



dress ; and, from the character of her countenance and manner, well became the splendour with which ladies of quality then appeared on such occasions.

The Marquis of A—— bowed haughtily, and she returned the salute with equal pride and distance of demeanour. He then took from the passive hand of Sir William Ashton the billet he had given him the moment before he approached the lady, and was about to speak, when she interrupted him. ‘I perceive, my lord, you are about to enter upon an unpleasant subject. I am sorry any such should have occurred at this time, to interrupt in the slightest degree the respectful reception due to your lordship ; but so it is. Mr. Edgar Ravenswood, for whom I have addressed the billet in your lordship’s hand, has abused the hospitality of this family, and Sir William Ashton’s softness of temper, in order to seduce a young person into engagements without her parents’ consent, and of which they never can approve.’

Both gentlemen answered at once. ‘My kinsman is incapable ——’ said the Lord Marquis.

‘I am confident that my daughter Lucy is still more incapable ——’ said the Lord Keeper.

Lady Ashton at once interrupted and replied to them both. —‘My Lord Marquis, your kinsman, if Mr. Ravenswood has the honour to be so, has made the attempt privately to secure the affections of this young and inexperienced girl. Sir William Ashton, your daughter has been simple enough to give more encouragement than she ought to have done to so very improper a suitor.’

‘And I think, madam,’ said the Lord Keeper, losing his accustomed temper and patience, ‘that if you had nothing better to tell us, you had better have kept this family secret to yourself also.’

‘You will pardon me, Sir William,’ said the lady, calmly ; ‘the noble Marquis has a right to know the cause of the treatment I have found it necessary to use to a gentleman whom he calls his blood-relation.’

‘It is a cause,’ muttered the Lord Keeper, ‘which has emerged since the effect has taken place ; for, if it exists at all, I am sure she knew nothing of it when her letter to Ravenswood was written.’

‘It is the first time that I have heard of this,’ said the Marquis ; ‘but, since your ladyship has tabled a subject so delicate, permit me to say, that my kinsman’s birth and con-

nexions entitled him to a patient hearing, and at least a civil refusal, even in case of his being so ambitious as to raise his eyes to the daughter of Sir William Ashton.'

'You will recollect, my lord, of what blood Miss Lucy Ashton is come by the mother's side,' said the lady.

'I do remember your descent — from a younger branch of the house of Angus,' said the Marquis; 'and your ladyship — forgive me, lady — ought not to forget that the Ravenswoods have thrice intermarried with the main stem. Come, madam, I know how matters stand — old and long-fostered prejudices are difficult to get over, I make every allowance for them; I ought not, and I would not, otherwise have suffered my kinsman to depart alone, expelled, in a manner, from this house, but I had hopes of being a mediator. I am still unwilling to leave you in anger, and shall not set forward till after noon, as I rejoin the Master of Ravenswood upon the road a few miles from hence. Let us talk over this matter more coolly.'

'It is what I anxiously desire, my lord,' said Sir William Ashton, eagerly. 'Lady Ashton, we will not permit my Lord of A—— to leave us in displeasure. We must compel him to tarry dinner at the castle.'

'The castle,' said the lady, 'and all that it contains, are at the command of the Marquis, so long as he chooses to honour it with his residence; but touching the farther discussion of this disagreeable topic ——'

'Pardon me, good madam,' said the Marquis; 'but I cannot allow you to express any hasty resolution on a subject so important. I see that more company is arriving; and, since I have the good fortune to renew my former acquaintance with Lady Ashton, I hope she will give me leave to avoid perilling what I prize so highly upon any disagreeable subject of discussion — at least till we have talked over more pleasant topics.'

The lady smiled, courtesied, and gave her hand to the Marquis, by whom, with all the formal gallantry of the time, which did not permit the guest to tuck the lady of the house under the arm, as a rustic does his sweetheart at a wake, she was ushered to the eating-room.

Here they were joined by Bucklaw, Craigengelt, and other neighbours, whom the Lord Keeper had previously invited to meet the Marquis of A——. An apology, founded upon a slight indisposition, was alleged as an excuse for the absence of Miss Ashton, whose seat appeared unoccupied. The entertainment was splendid to profusion, and was protracted till a late hour.

## CHAPTER XXIII

Such was our fallen father's fate,  
Yet better than mine own ;  
He shared his exile with his mate,  
I'm banish'd forth alone.

WALLER.

I WILL not attempt to describe the mixture of indignation and regret with which Ravenswood left the seat which had belonged to his ancestors. The terms in which Lady Ashton's billet was couched rendered it impossible for him, without being deficient in that spirit of which he perhaps had too much, to remain an instant longer within its walls. The Marquis, who had his share in the affront, was, nevertheless, still willing to make some efforts at conciliation. He therefore suffered his kinsman to depart alone, making him promise, however, that he would wait for him at the small inn called the Tod's Hole, situated, as our readers may be pleased to recollect, half-way betwixt Ravenswood Castle and Wolf's Crag, and about five Scottish miles distant from each. Here the Marquis proposed to join the Master of Ravenswood, either that night or the next morning. His own feelings would have induced him to have left the castle directly, but he was loth to forfeit, without at least one effort, the advantages which he had proposed from his visit to the Lord Keeper ; and the Master of Ravenswood was, even in the very heat of his resentment, unwilling to foreclose any chance of reconciliation which might arise out of the partiality which Sir William Ashton had shown towards him, as well as the intercessory arguments of his noble kinsman. He himself departed without a moment's delay, farther than was necessary to make this arrangement.

At first he spurred his horse at a quick pace through an avenue of the park, as if, by rapidity of motion, he could stupify the confusion of feelings with which he was assailed. But as the road grew wilder and more sequestered, and when

the trees had hidden the turrets of the castle, he gradually slackened his pace, as if to indulge the painful reflections which he had in vain endeavoured to repress. The path in which he found himself led him to the Mermaiden's Fountain, and to the cottage of Alice; and the fatal influence which superstitious belief attached to the former spot, as well as the admonitions which had been in vain offered to him by the inhabitant of the latter, forced themselves upon his memory. 'Old saws speak truth,' he said to himself, 'and the Mermaiden's Well has indeed witnessed the last act of rashness of the heir of Ravenswood. Alice spoke well,' he continued, 'and I am in the situation which she foretold; or rather, I am more deeply dishonoured — not the dependant and ally of the destroyer of my father's house, as the old sibyl presaged, but the degraded wretch who has aspired to hold that subordinate character, and has been rejected with disdain.'

We are bound to tell the tale as we have received it; and, considering the distance of the time, and propensity of those through whose mouths it has passed to the marvellous, this could not be called a Scottish story unless it manifested a tinge of Scottish superstition. As Ravenswood approached the solitary fountain, he is said to have met with the following singular adventure:—His horse, which was moving slowly forward, suddenly interrupted its steady and composed pace, snorted, reared, and, though urged by the spur, refused to proceed, as if some object of terror had suddenly presented itself. On looking to the fountain, Ravenswood discerned a female figure, dressed in a white, or rather greyish, mantle, placed on the very spot on which Lucy Ashton had reclined while listening to the fatal tale of love. His immediate impression was that she had conjectured by which path he would traverse the park on his departure, and placed herself at this well-known and sequestered place of rendezvous, to indulge her own sorrow and his in a parting interview. In this belief he jumped from his horse, and, making its bridle fast to a tree, walked hastily towards the fountain, pronouncing eagerly, yet under his breath, the words, 'Miss Ashton! — Lucy!'

The figure turned as he addressed it, and discovered to his wondering eyes the features, not of Lucy Ashton, but of old blind Alice. The singularity of her dress, which rather resembled a shroud than the garment of a living woman; the appearance of her person, larger, as it struck him, than it usually seemed to be; above all, the strange circumstance

of a blind, infirm, and decrepit person being found alone and at a distance from her habitation (considerable, if her infirmities be taken into account), combined to impress him with a feeling of wonder approaching to fear. As he approached, she arose slowly from her seat, held her shrivelled hand up as if to prevent his coming more near, and her withered lips moved fast, although no sound issued from them. Ravenswood stopped; and as, after a moment's pause, he again advanced towards her, Alice, or her apparition, moved or glided backwards towards the thicket, still keeping her face turned towards him. The trees soon hid the form from his sight; and, yielding to the strong and terrific impression that the being which he had seen was not of this world, the Master of Ravenswood remained rooted to the ground whereon he had stood when he caught his last view of her. At length, summoning up his courage, he advanced to the spot on which the figure had seemed to be seated; but neither was there pressure of the grass nor any other circumstance to induce him to believe that what he had seen was real and substantial.

Full of those strange thoughts and confused apprehensions which awake in the bosom of one who conceives he has witnessed some preternatural appearance, the Master of Ravenswood walked back towards his horse, frequently, however, looking behind him, not without apprehension, as if expecting that the vision would reappear. But the apparition, whether it was real or whether it was the creation of a heated and agitated imagination, returned not again; and he found his horse sweating and terrified, as if experiencing that agony of fear with which the presence of a supernatural being is supposed to agitate the brute creation. The Master mounted, and rode slowly forward, soothing his steed from time to time, while the animal seemed internally to shrink and shudder, as if expecting some new object of fear at the opening of every glade. The rider, after a moment's consideration, resolved to investigate the matter farther. 'Can my eyes have deceived me,' he said, 'and deceived me for such a space of time? Or are this woman's infirmities but feigned, in order to excite compassion? And even then, her motion resembled not that of a living and existing person. Must I adopt the popular creed, and think that the unhappy being has formed a league with the powers of darkness? I am determined to be resolved; I will not brook imposition even from my own eyes.'

In this uncertainty he rode up to the little wicket of Alice's



garden. Her seat beneath the birch-tree was vacant, though the day was pleasant and the sun was high. He approached the hut, and heard from within the sobs and wailing of a female. No answer was returned when he knocked, so that, after a moment's pause, he lifted the latch and entered. It was indeed a house of solitude and sorrow. Stretched upon her miserable pallet lay the corpse of the last retainer of the house of Ravenswood who still abode on their paternal domains! Life had but shortly departed; and the little girl by whom she had been attended in her last moments was wringing her hands and sobbing, betwixt childish fear and sorrow, over the body of her mistress.

The Master of Ravenswood had some difficulty to compose the terrors of the poor child, whom his unexpected appearance had at first rather appalled than comforted; and when he succeeded, the first expression which the girl used intimated that 'he had come too late.' Upon inquiring the meaning of this expression, he learned that the deceased, upon the first attack of the mortal agony, had sent a peasant to the castle to beseech an interview of the Master of Ravenswood, and had expressed the utmost impatience for his return. But the messengers of the poor are tardy and negligent: the fellow had not reached the castle, as was afterwards learned, until Ravenswood had left it, and had then found too much amusement among the retinue of the strangers to return in any haste to the cottage of Alice. Meantime her anxiety of mind seemed to increase with the agony of her body; and, to use the phrase of Babie, her only attendant, 'she prayed powerfully that she might see her master's son once more, and renew her warning.' She died just as the clock in the distant village tolled one; and Ravenswood remembered, with internal shudderings, that he had heard the chime sound through the wood just before he had seen what he was now much disposed to consider as the spectre of the deceased.

It was necessary, as well from his respect to the departed as in common humanity to her terrified attendant, that he should take some measures to relieve the girl from her distressing situation. The deceased, he understood, had expressed a desire to be buried in a solitary churchyard, near the little inn of the Tod's Hole, called the Hermitage, or more commonly Armitage, in which lay interred some of the Ravenswood family, and many of their followers. Ravenswood conceived it his duty to gratify this predilection, so commonly found to exist among

the Scottish peasantry, and despatched Babie to the neighbouring village to procure the assistance of some females, assuring her that, in the meanwhile, he would himself remain with the dead body, which, as in Thessaly of old, it is accounted highly unfit to leave without a watch.

Thus, in the course of a quarter of an hour or little more, he found himself sitting a solitary guard over the inanimate corpse of her whose dismissed spirit, unless his eyes had strangely deceived him, had so recently manifested itself before him. Notwithstanding his natural courage, the Master was considerably affected by a concurrence of circumstances so extraordinary. 'She died expressing her eager desire to see me. Can it be, then,' was his natural course of reflection — 'can strong and earnest wishes, formed during the last agony of nature, survive its catastrophe, surmount the awful bounds of the spiritual world, and place before us its inhabitants in the hues and colouring of life? And why was that manifested to the eye which could not unfold its tale to the ear? and wherefore should a breach be made in the laws of nature, yet its purpose remain unknown? Vain questions, which only death, when it shall make me like the pale and withered form before me, can ever resolve.'

He laid a cloth, as he spoke, over the lifeless face, upon whose features he felt unwilling any longer to dwell. He then took his place in an old carved oaken chair, ornamented with his own armorial bearings, which Alice had contrived to appropriate to her own use in the pillage which took place among creditors, officers, domestics, and messengers of the law when his father left Ravenswood Castle for the last time. Thus seated, he banished, as much as he could, the superstitious feelings which the late incident naturally inspired. His own were sad enough, without the exaggeration of supernatural terror, since he found himself transferred from the situation of a successful lover of Lucy Ashton, and an honoured and respected friend of her father, into the melancholy and solitary guardian of the abandoned and forsaken corpse of a common pauper.

He was relieved, however, from his sad office sooner than he could reasonably have expected, considering the distance betwixt the hut of the deceased and the village, and the age and infirmities of three old women who came from thence, in military phrase, to relieve guard upon the body of the defunct. On any other occasion the speed of these reverend sibyls would

been much more moderate, for the first was eighty years and upwards, the second was paralytic, and the third of a leg from some accident. But the burial duties due to the deceased are, to the Scottish peasant of either sex, a labour of love. I know not whether it is from the superstition of the people, grave and enthusiastic as it certainly is, or from the recollection of the ancient Catholic opinions, when the funeral rites were always considered as a period of festival and living; but feasting, good cheer, and even inebriety, are, and are, the frequent accompaniments of a Scottish fashioned burial. What the funeral feast, or 'dirgie,' as it is called, was to the men, the gloomy preparations of the body for the coffin were to the women. To straighten the distorted limbs upon a board used for that melancholy purpose, to array the corpse in clean linen, and over that in the yellow shroud, were operations committed always to the matrons of the village, and in which they found a singular and gloomy delight.

The old women paid the Master their salutations with a friendly smile, which reminded him of the meeting betwixt the good and the witches on the blasted heath of Forres. He gave them some money, and recommended to them the charge of the dead body of their contemporary, an office which they readily undertook; intimating to him at the same time that they must leave the hut, in order that they might begin their painful duties. Ravenswood readily agreed to depart, only promising to recommend to them due attention to the body, and to receive information where he was to find the sexton, the sexton's daughter, who had in charge the deserted churchyard of the village, in order to prepare matters for the reception of Old Corbally in the place of repose which she had selected for herself.

'I'll no be pinched to find out Johnie Mortsheugh,' said the old sibyl, and still her withered cheek bore a grisly smile; 'the wells near the Tod's Hole, a house of entertainment where there has been mony a blithe birling, for death and draining are near neighbours to ane anither.'

'Aye! and that's e'en true, cummer,' said the lame hag, leaning herself with a crutch which supported the shortness of her left leg, 'for I mind when the father of this Master of Ravenswood that is now standing before us sticked young Corbally all with his whinger, for a wrang word said ower their brandy, or what not: he gaed in as light as a lark, and came out wi' his feet foremost. I was at the winding of

the corpse; and when the bluid was washed off, he bonny bouk of man's body.'

It may easily be believed that this ill-timed and hastened the Master's purpose of quitting a company omened and so odious. Yet, while walking to the which his horse was tied, and busying himself with adjusting the girths of the saddle, he could not avoid hearing, through the hedge of the little garden, a conversation respecting self, betwixt the lame woman and the octogenarian sibyl. A pair had hobbled into the garden to gather rosemary, sage, wood, rue, and other plants proper to be strewed upon the body, and burned by way of fumigation in the chimney of the cottage. The paralytic wretch, almost exhausted by his journey, was left guard upon the corpse, lest witches or evil spirits might play their sport with it.

The following low, croaking dialogue was necessarily heard by the Master of Ravenswood:—

'That's a fresh and full-grown hemlock, Annie Winny! mony a cummer lang syne wad hae sought nae better place to flee over hill and how, through mist and moonlight, and down in the King of France's cellar.'

'Ay, cummer! but the very deil has turned as hard-lodged now as the Lord Keeper and the grit folk, that hae been like whinstane. They prick us and they pine us, and they lay us on the pinnywinkles for witches; and, if I say my prayers backwards ten times ower, Satan will never gie me amends for them.'

'Did ye ever see the foul thief?' asked her neighbour.

'Na!' replied the other spokeswoman; 'but I trow I dreamed of him mony a time, and I think the day will come when they will burn me for't. But ne'er mind, cummer! I'll take this dollar of the Master's, and we'll send down for bread for yill, tobacco, and a drap brandy to burn, and a wee saft sugar; and be there deil, or nae deil, lass, we'll have a merry night o't.'

Here her leathern chops uttered a sort of cackling, resembling, to a certain degree, the cry of the screech owl.

'He's a frank man, and a free-handed man, the Master said Annie Winnie, 'and a comely personage—broad shoulders, and narrow around the lungies. He wad mak a fine corpse; I wad like to hae the streiking and winding o' his body.'

'It is written on his brow, Annie Winnie,' returned

octogenarian, her companion, 'that hand of woman, or of man either, will never straught him : dead-deal will never be laid on his back, make you your market of that, for I hae it frae a sure hand.'

'Will it be his lot to die on the battle-ground then, Ailsie Gourlay ? Will he die by the sword or the ball, as his forbears hae dune before him, mony ane o' them ?'

'Ask nae mair questions about it — he'll no be graced sae far,' replied the sage.

'I ken ye are wiser than ither folk, Ailsie Gourlay. But wha tell'd ye this ?'

'Fashna your thumb about that, Annie Winnie,' answered the sibyl, 'I hae it frae a hand sure enough.'

'But ye said ye never saw the foul thief,' reiterated her inquisitive companion.

'I hae it frae as sure a hand,' said Ailsie, 'and frae them that spaed his fortune before the sark gaed ower his head.'

'Hark ! I hear his horse's feet riding aff,' said the other ; 'they dinna sound as if good luck was wi' them.'

'Mak haste, sirs,' cried the paralytic hag from the cottage, 'and let us do what is needfu', and say what is fitting ; for, if the dead corpse binna straughted, it will girn and thraw, and that will fear the best o' us.'

Ravenswood was now out of hearing. He despised most of the ordinary prejudices about witchcraft, omens, and vaticination, to which his age and country still gave such implicit credit that to express a doubt of them was accounted a crime equal to the unbelief of Jews or Saracens ; he knew also that the prevailing belief concerning witches, operating upon the hypochondriac habits of those whom age, infirmity, and poverty rendered liable to suspicion, and enforced by the fear of death and the pangs of the most cruel tortures, often extorted those confessions which encumber and disgrace the criminal records of Scotland during the 17th century. But the vision of that morning, whether real or imaginary, had impressed his mind with a superstitious feeling which he in vain endeavoured to shake off. The nature of the business which awaited him at the little inn, called Tod's Hole, where he soon after arrived, was not of a kind to restore his spirits.

It was necessary he should see Mortsheugh, the sexton of the old burial-ground at Armitage, to arrange matters for the funeral of Alice ; and, as the man dwelt near the place of her late residence, the Master, after a slight refreshment, walked



towards the place where the body of Alice was to be deposited. It was situated in the nook formed by the eddying sweep of a stream, which issued from the adjoining hills. A rude cavern in an adjacent rock, which, in the interior, was cut into the shape of a cross, formed the hermitage, where some Saxon saint had in ancient times done penance, and given name to the place. The rich Abbey of Coldinghame had, in latter days, established a chapel in the neighbourhood, of which no vestige was now visible, though the churchyard which surrounded it was still, as upon the present occasion, used for the interment of particular persons. One or two shattered yew-trees still grew within the precincts of that which had once been holy ground. Warriors and barons had been buried there of old, but their names were forgotten, and their monuments demolished. The only sepulchral memorials which remained were the upright headstones which mark the graves of persons of inferior rank. The abode of the sexton was a solitary cottage adjacent to the ruined wall of the cemetery, but so low that, with its thatch, which nearly reached the ground, covered with a thick crop of grass, fog, and house-leaks, it resembled an overgrown grave. On inquiry, however, Ravenswood found that the man of the last mattock was absent at a bridal, being fiddler as well as grave-digger to the vicinity. He therefore retired to the little inn, leaving a message that early next morning he would again call for the person whose double occupation connected him at once with the house of mourning and the house of feasting.

An outrider of the Marquis arrived at Tod's Hole shortly after, with a message, intimating that his master would join Ravenswood at that place on the following morning; and the Master, who would otherwise have proceeded to his old retreat at Wolf's Crag, remained there accordingly to give meeting to his noble kinsman.

## CHAPTER XXIV

*Hamlet.* Has this fellow no feeling of his business? he sings at grave-making.

*Horatio.* Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

*Hamlet.* 'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

*Hamlet, Act V. Scene 1.*

THE sleep of Ravenswood was broken by ghastly and agitating visions, and his waking intervals disturbed by melancholy reflections on the past and painful anticipations of the future. He was perhaps the only traveller who ever slept in that miserable kennel without complaining of his lodgings, or feeling inconvenience from their deficiencies. It is when 'the mind is free the body's delicate.' Morning, however, found the Master an early riser, in hopes that the fresh air of the dawn might afford the refreshment which night had refused him. He took his way toward the solitary burial-ground, which lay about half a mile from the inn.

The thin blue smoke, which already began to curl upward, and to distinguish the cottage of the living from the habitation of the dead, apprised him that its inmate had returned and was stirring. Accordingly, on entering the little churchyard, he saw the old man labouring in a half-made grave. 'My destiny,' thought Ravenswood, 'seems to lead me to scenes of fate and of death; but these are childish thoughts, and they shall not master me. I will not again suffer my imagination to beguile my senses.' The old man rested on his spade as the Master approached him, as if to receive his commands; and as he did not immediately speak, the sexton opened the discourse in his own way.

'Ye will be a wedding customer, sir, I'se warrant?'

'What makes you think so, friend?' replied the Master.

'I live by twa trades, sir,' replied the blithe old man — 'fiddle, sir, and spade; filling the world, and emptying of it;

and I suld ken baith cast of customers by head-mark in thirty years' practice.'

'You are mistaken, however, this morning,' replied Ravenswood.

'Am I?' said the old man, looking keenly at him, 'troth and it may be; since, for as brent as your brow is, there is something sitting upon it this day that is as near akin to death as to wedlock. Weel — weel; the pick and shovel are as ready to your order as bow and fiddle.'

'I wish you,' said Ravenswood, 'to look after the decent interment of an old woman, Alice Gray, who lived at the Craighfoot in Ravenswood Park.'

'Alice Gray! — blind Alice!' said the sexton; 'and is she gane at last? that's another jow of the bell to bid me be ready. I mind when Habbie Gray brought her down to this land; a likely lass she was then, and looked ower her southland nose at us a'. I trow her pride got a downcome. And is she e'en gane?'

'She died yesterday,' said Ravenswood; 'and desired to be buried here beside her husband; you know where he lies, no doubt?'

'Ken where he lies!' answered the sexton, with national indirection of response. 'I ken whar a'boddy lies, that lies here. But ye were speaking o' her grave? Lord help us, it's no an ordinar grave that will haud her in, if a's true that folk said of Alice in her auld days; and if I gae to six feet deep — and a warlock's grave shouldna be an inch mair ebb, or her ain witch cummers would soon whirl her out of her shroud for a' their auld acquaintance — and be't six feet, or be't three, wha's to pay the making o't, I pray ye?'

'I will pay that, my friend, and all reasonable charges.'

'Reasonable charges!' said the sexton; 'ou, there's grund-mail — and bell-siller, though the bell's broken, nae doubt — and the kist — and my day's wark — and my bit fee — and some brandy and yill to the dirgie; I am no thinking that you can inter her, to ca' decently, under saxteen pund Scots.'

'There is the money, my friend,' said Ravenswood, 'and something over. Be sure you know the grave.'

'Ye'll be ane o' her English relations, I'se warrant,' said the hoary man of skulls; 'I hae heard she married far below her station. It was very right to let her bite on the bridle when she was living, and it's very right to gie her a decent burial.'

now she's dead, for that's a matter o' credit to yoursell rather than to her. Folk may let their kindred shift for themsells when they are alive, and can bear the burden of their ain misdoings; but it's an unnatural thing to let them be buried like dogs, when a' the discredit gangs to the kindred. What kens the dead corpse about it?'

'You would not have people neglect their relations on a bridal occasion neither?' said Ravenswood, who was amused with the professional limitation of the grave-digger's philanthropy.

The old man cast up his sharp grey eyes with a shrewd smile, as if he understood the jest, but instantly continued, with his former gravity, 'Bridals—wha wad neglect bridals that had ony regard for plenishing the earth? To be sure, they suld be celebrated with all manner of good cheer, and meeting of friends, and musical instruments—harp, sackbut, and psaltery; or gude fiddle and pipes, when these auld-warld instruments of melody are hard to be compassed.'

'The presence of the fiddle, I daresay,' replied Ravenswood, 'would atone for the absence of all others.'

The sexton again looked sharply up at him, as he answered, 'Nae doubt—nae doubt, if it were weel played; but yonder,' he said, as if to change the discourse, 'is Halbert Gray's lang hame, that ye were speering after, just the third bourock beyond the muckle through-stane that stands on sax legs yonder, abune some ane of the Ravenswoods; for there is mony of their kin and followers here, deil lift them! though it isna just their main burial-place.'

'They are no favourites, then, of yours, these Ravenswoods?' said the Master, not much pleased with the passing benediction which was thus bestowed on his family and name.

'I kenna wha should favour them,' said the grave-digger; 'when they had lands and power, they were ill guides of them baith, and now their head's down, there's few care how lang they may be of lifting it again.'

'Indeed!' said Ravenswood; 'I never heard that this unhappy family deserved ill-will at the hands of their country. I grant their poverty, if that renders them contemptible.'

'It will gang a far way till't,' said the sexton of Hermitage, 'ye may tak my word for that; at least, I ken naething else that suld mak myself contemptible, and folk are far frae respecting me as they wad do if I lived in a twa-lofted sclated house. But as for the Ravenswoods, I hae seen three generations of them, deil ane to mend other.'

'I thought they had enjoyed a fair character in the country,' said their descendant.

'Character! Ou, ye see, sir,' said the sexton, 'as for the auld gudesire body of a lord, I lived on his land when I was a swanking young chield, and could hae blawn the trumpet wi' ony body, for I had wind eneugh then; and touching this trumpeter Marine<sup>1</sup> that I have heard play afore the lords of the circuit, I wad hae made nae mair o' him than of a bairn and a bawbee whistle. I defy him to hae played "Boot and saddle," or "Horse and away," or "Gallants, come trot," with me; he hadna the tones.'

'But what is all this to old Lord Ravenswood, my friend?' said the Master, who, with an anxiety not unnatural in his circumstances, was desirous of prosecuting the musician's first topic—'what had his memory to do with the degeneracy of the trumpet music?'

'Just this, sir,' answered the sexton, 'that I lost my wind in his service. Ye see I was trumpeter at the castle, and had allowance for blawing at break of day, and at dinner time, and other whiles when there was company about, and it pleased my lord; and when he raised his militia to caper awa' to Bothwell Brig against the wrang-headed wastland Whigs, I behoved, reason or nane, to munt a horse and caper awa' wi' them.'

'And very reasonable,' said Ravenswood; 'you were his servant and vassal.'

'Servitor, say ye?' replied the sexton, 'and so I was; but it was to blaw folk to their warm dinner, or at the warst to a decent kirkyard, and no to skirl them awa' to a bluidy braeside, where there was deil a bedral but the hooded crow. But bide ye, ye shall hear what cam o't, and how far I am bund to be bedesman to the Ravenswoods. Till't, ye see, we gaed on a braw simmer morning, twenty-fourth of June, saxteen hundred and se'enty-nine, of a' the days of the month and year—drums beat, guns rattled, horses kicked and trampled. Hackstoun of Rathillet keepit the brig wi' musket and carabine and pike, sword and scythe for what I ken, and we horsemen were ordered down to cross at the ford,—I hate fords at a' times, let abee when there's thousands of armed men on the other side. There was auld Ravenswood brandishing his Andrew Ferrara at the head, and crying to us to come and buckle to, as if we had been gaun to a fair; there was Caleb Balderstone, that is living yet, flourishing in the rear, and swearing Gog and Magog, he would

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<sup>1</sup> See Note 10.



put steel through the guts of ony man that turned bridle; there was young Allan Ravenswood, that was then Master, wi' a bended pistol in his hand — it was a mercy it gaed na aff! — crying to me, that had scarce as much wind left as serve the necessary purpose of my ain lungs, “Sound, you poltroon! — sound, you damned cowardly villain, or I will blow your brains out!” and, to be sure, I blew sic points of war that the scraugh of a clockin-hen was music to them.’

‘Well, sir, cut all this short,’ said Ravenswood.

‘Short! I had like to hae been cut short mysell, in the flower of my youth, as Scripture says; and that’s the very thing that I compleen o’. Weel! in to the water we behoved a’ to splash, heels ower head, sit or fa’ — ae horse driving on anither, as is the way of brute beasts, and riders that hae as little sense; the very bushes on the ither side were ableeze wi’ the flashes of the Whig guns; and my horse had just taen the grund, when a blackavised westland carle — I wad mind the face o’ him a hundred years yet — an ee like a wild falcon’s, and a beard as broad as my shovel — clapped the end o’ his lang black gun within a quarter’s length of my lug! By the grace o’ Mercy, the horse swarved round, and I fell aff at the tae side as the ball whistled by at the tither, and the fell auld lord took the Whig such a swauk wi’ his broadsword that he made two pieces o’ his head, and down fell the lurdane wi’ a’ his bouk abune me.’

‘You were rather obliged to the old lord, I think,’ said Ravenswood.

‘Was I? my sartie! first for bringing me into jeopardy, would I nould I, and then for whomling a chield on the tap o’ me that dang the very wind out of my body? I hae been short-breathed ever since, and canna gang twenty yards without peghing like a miller’s aiver.’

‘You lost, then, your place as trumpeter?’ said Ravenswood.

‘Lost it! to be sure I lost it,’ replied the sexton, ‘for I couldna hae played pew upon a dry humlock; but I might hae dune weel eneugh, for I keepit the wage and the free house, and little to do but play on the fiddle to them, but for Allan, last Lord Ravenswood, that was faur waur than ever his father was.’

‘What,’ said the Master, ‘did my father — I mean, did his father’s son — this last Lord Ravenswood, deprive you of what the bounty of his father allowed you?’

‘Ay, troth did he,’ answered the old man; ‘for he loot his

affairs gang to the dogs, and let in this Sir William Ashton on us, that will gie naething for naething, and just removed me and a' the puir creatures that had bite and soup in the castle, and a hole to put our heads in, when things were in the auld way.'

'If Lord Ravenswood protected his people, my friend, while he had the means of doing so, I think they might spare his memory,' replied the Master.

'Ye are welcome to your ain opinion, sir,' said the sexton; 'but ye winna persuade me that he did his duty, either to himsell or to huz puir dependent creatures, in guiding us the gate he has done; he might hae gien us life-rent tacks of our bits o' houses and yards; and me, that's an auld man, living in yon miserable cabin, that's fitter for the dead than the quick, and killed wi' rheumatise, and John Smith in my dainty bit mailing, and his window glazen, and a' because Ravenswood guided his gear like a fule!'

'It is but too true,' said Ravenswood, conscience-struck; 'the penalties of extravagance extend far beyond the prodigal's own sufferings.'

'However,' said the sexton, 'this young man Edgar is like to avenge my wrangs on the haill of his kindred.'

'Indeed?' said Ravenswood; 'why should you suppose so?'

'They say he is about to marry the daughter of Leddy Ashton; and let her leddyship get his head ance under her oexter, and see you if she winna gie his neck a thraw. Sorra a bit, if I were him! Let her alane for hauding a' thing in het water that draws near her. Sae the warst wish I shall wish the lad is, that he may take his ain creditable gate o't, and ally himsell wi' his father's enemies, that have taken his broad lands and my bonny kail-yard from the lawful owners thereof.'

Cervantes acutely remarks, that flattery is pleasing even from the mouth of a madman; and censure, as well as praise, often affects us, while we despise the opinions and motives on which it is founded and expressed. Ravenswood, abruptly reiterating his command that Alice's funeral should be attended to, flung away from the sexton, under the painful impression that the great as well as the small vulgar would think of his engagement with Lucy like this ignorant and selfish peasant.

'And I have stooped to subject myself to these calumnies, and am rejected notwithstanding! Lucy, your faith must be true and perfect as the diamond to compensate for the dis-

honour which men's opinions, and the conduct of your mother, attach to the heir of Ravenswood !'

As he raised his eyes, he beheld the Marquis of A——, who, having arrived at the Tod's Hole, had walked forth to look for his kinsman.

After mutual greetings, he made some apology to the Master for not coming forward on the preceding evening. 'It was his wish,' he said, 'to have done so, but he had come to the knowledge of some matters which induced him to delay his purpose. I find,' he proceeded, 'there has been a love affair here, kinsman; and though I might blame you for not having communicated with me, as being in some degree the chief of your family ——'

'With your lordship's permission,' said Ravenswood, 'I am deeply grateful for the interest you are pleased to take in me, but *I* am the chief and head of my family.'

'I know it—I know it,' said the Marquis; 'in a strict heraldic and genealogical sense, you certainly are so; what I mean is, that being in some measure under my guardianship ——'

'I must take the liberty to say, my lord ——' answered Ravenswood, and the tone in which he interrupted the Marquis boded no long duration to the friendship of the noble relatives, when he himself was interrupted by the little sexton, who came puffing after them, to ask if their honours would choose music at the change-house to make up for short cheer.

'We want no music,' said the Master, abruptly.

'Your honour disna ken what ye're refusing, then,' said the fiddler, with the impertinent freedom of his profession. 'I can play, "Wilt thou do't again," and "The Auld Man's Mear's Dead," sax times better than ever Patie Birnie.<sup>1</sup> I'll get my fiddle in the turning of a coffin-screw.'

'Take yourself away, sir,' said the Marquis.

'And if your honour be a north-country gentleman,' said the persevering minstrel, 'whilk I wad judge from your tongue, I can play "Liggeram Cosh," and "Mullin Dhu," and "The Cummers of Athole."'

'Take yourself away, friend; you interrupt our conversation.'

'Or if, under your honour's favour, ye should happen to be a thought honest, I can play (this in a low and confidential tone) "Killiecrankie," and "The King shall hae his ain," and

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<sup>1</sup> A celebrated fiddler and songster of Kinghorn. See Allan Ramsay's *Collected Poems*, ed. 1721 (*Lairng*).

“The Auld Stuarts back again”; and the wife at the change-house is a decent, discreet body, neither kens nor cares what toasts are drucken, and what tunes are played, in her house: she’s deaf to a’thing but the clink o’ the siller.’

The Marquis, who was sometimes suspected of Jacobitism, could not help laughing as he threw the fellow a dollar, and bid him go play to the servants if he had a mind, and leave them at peace.

‘Aweel, gentlemen,’ said he, ‘I am wishing your honours gude day. I’ll be a’ the better of the dollar, and ye’ll be the waur of wanting the music, I’s e tell ye. But I’s e gang hame, and finish the grave in the tuning o’ a fiddle-string, lay by my spade, and then get my tother bread-winner, and awa’ to your folk, and see if they hae better lugs than their masters.’

## CHAPTER XXV

True love, an thou be true,  
Thou hast ane kittle part to play ;  
For fortune, fashion, fancy, and thou,  
Maun strive for many a day.

I've kend by mony a friend's tale,  
Far better by this heart of mine,  
What time and change of fancy avail  
A true-love knot to untwine.

HENDERSOUN.

I WISHED to tell you, my good kinsman,' said the Marquis, 'now that we are quit of that impertinent fiddler, that I had tried to discuss this love affair of yours with Sir William Ashton's daughter. I never saw the young lady but for a few minutes to-day ; so, being a stranger to her personal merits, I pay a compliment to you, and offer her no offence, in saying you might do better.'

'My lord, I am much indebted for the interest you have taken in my affairs,' said Ravenswood. 'I did not intend to have troubled you in any matter concerning Miss Ashton. As my engagement with that young lady has reached your lordship, I can only say, that you must necessarily suppose that I was aware of the objections to my marrying into her father's family, and of course must have been completely satisfied with the reasons by which these objections are overbalanced, since I have proceeded so far in the matter.'

'Nay, Master, if you had heard me out,' said his noble relation, 'you might have spared that observation ; for, without questioning that you had reasons which seemed to you to counterbalance every other obstacle, I set myself, by every means that it became me to use towards the Ashtons, to persuade them to meet your views.'

'I am obliged to your lordship for your unsolicited intercession,' said Ravenswood ; 'especially as I am sure your lord-



ship would never carry it beyond the bounds which it became me to use.'

'Of that,' said the Marquis, 'you may be confident; I myself felt the delicacy of the matter too much to place a gentleman nearly connected with my house in a degrading or dubious situation with these Ashtons. But I pointed out all the advantages of their marrying their daughter into a house so honourable, and so nearly related with the first in Scotland; I explained the exact degree of relationship in which the Ravenswoods stand to ourselves; and I even hinted how political matters were like to turn, and what cards would be trumps next Parliament. I said I regarded you as a son — or a nephew, or so — rather than as a more distant relation; and that I made your affair entirely my own.'

'And what was the issue of your lordship's explanation?' said Ravenswood, in some doubt whether he should resent or express gratitude for his interference.

'Why, the Lord Keeper would have listened to reason,' said the Marquis; 'he is rather unwilling to leave his place, which, in the present view of a change, must be vacated; and, to say truth, he seemed to have a liking for you, and to be sensible of the general advantages to be attained by such a match. But his lady, who is tongue of the trump, Master ——'

'What of Lady Ashton, my lord?' said Ravenswood; 'let me know the issue of this extraordinary conference: I can bear it.'

'I am glad of that, kinsman,' said the Marquis, 'for I am ashamed to tell you half what she said. It is enough — her mind is made up, and the mistress of a first-rate boarding-school could not have rejected with more haughty indifference the suit of a half-pay Irish officer, beseeching permission to wait upon the heiress of a West India planter, than Lady Ashton spurned every proposal of mediation which it could at all become me to offer in behalf of you, my good kinsman. I cannot guess what she means. A more honourable connexion she could not form, that's certain. As for money and land, that used to be her husband's business rather than hers; I really think she hates you for having the rank which her husband has not, and perhaps for not having the lands that her goodman has. But I should only vex you to say more about it — here we are at the change-house.'

The Master of Ravenswood paused as he entered the

cottage, which reeked through all its crevices, and they were not few, from the exertions of the Marquis's travelling-cooks to supply good cheer, and spread, as it were, a table in the wilderness.

'My Lord Marquis,' said Ravenswood, 'I already mentioned that accident has put your lordship in possession of a secret which, with my consent, should have remained one even to you, my kinsman, for some time. Since the secret was to part from my own custody, and that of the only person besides who was interested in it, I am not sorry it should have reached your lordship's ears, as being fully aware that you are my noble kinsman and friend.'

'You may believe it is safely lodged with me, Master of Ravenswood,' said the Marquis; 'but I should like well to hear you say that you renounced the idea of an alliance which you can hardly pursue without a certain degree of degradation.'

'Of that, my lord, I shall judge,' answered Ravenswood, 'and I hope with delicacy as sensitive as any of my friends. But I have no engagement with Sir William and Lady Ashton. It is with Miss Ashton alone that I have entered upon the subject, and my conduct in the matter shall be entirely ruled by hers. If she continues to prefer me in my poverty to the wealthier suitors whom her friends recommend, I may well make some sacrifice to her sincere affection: I may well surrender to her the less tangible and less palpable advantages of birth, and the deep-rooted prejudices of family hatred. If Miss Lucy Ashton should change her mind on a subject of such delicacy, I trust my friends will be silent on my disappointment, and I shall know how to make my enemies so.'

'Spoke like a gallant young nobleman,' said the Marquis; 'for my part, I have that regard for you, that I should be sorry the thing went on. This Sir William Ashton was a pretty enough pettifogging kind of a lawyer twenty years ago, and betwixt battling at the bar and leading in committees of Parliament he has got well on; the Darien matter lent him a lift, for he had good intelligence and sound views, and sold out in time; but the best work is had out of him. No government will take him at his own, or rather his wife's extravagant, valuation; and betwixt his indecision and her insolence, from all I can guess, he will outsit his market, and be had cheap when no one will bid for him. I say nothing of Miss Ashton; but I assure you, a connexion with her father

will be neither useful nor ornamental, beyond that part of your father's spoils which he may be prevailed upon to disgorge by way of tocher-good; and take my word for it, you will get more if you have spirit to bell the cat with him in the House of Peers. And I will be the man, cousin,' continued his lordship, 'will course the fox for you, and make him rue the day that ever he refused a composition too honourable for him, and proposed by me on the behalf of a kinsman.'

There was something in all this that, as it were, overshot the mark. Ravenswood could not disguise from himself that his noble kinsman had more reasons for taking offence at the reception of his suit than regarded his interest and honour, yet he could neither complain nor be surprised that it should be so. He contented himself, therefore, with repeating, that his attachment was to Miss Ashton personally; that he desired neither wealth nor aggrandisement from her father's means and influence; and that nothing should prevent his keeping his engagement, excepting her own express desire that it should be relinquished; and he requested as a favour that the matter might be no more mentioned betwixt them at present, assuring the Marquis of A—— that he should be his confidant in its progress or its interruption.

The Marquis soon had more agreeable, as well as more interesting, subjects on which to converse. A foot-post, who had followed him from Edinburgh to Ravenswood Castle, and had traced his steps to the 'Tod's Hole, brought him a packet laden with good news. The political calculations of the Marquis had proved just, both in London and at Edinburgh, and he saw almost within his grasp the pre-eminence for which he had panted. The refreshments which the servants had prepared were now put on the table, and an epicure would perhaps have enjoyed them with additional zest from the contrast which such fare afforded to the miserable cabin in which it was served up.

The turn of conversation corresponded with and added to the social feelings of the company. The Marquis expanded with pleasure on the power which probable incidents were likely to assign to him, and on the use which he hoped to make of it in serving his kinsman Ravenswood. Ravenswood could but repeat the gratitude which he really felt, even when he considered the topic as too long dwelt upon. The wine was excellent, notwithstanding its having been brought in a runlet from Edinburgh; and the habits of the Marquis, when engaged

with such good cheer, were somewhat sedentary. And so it fell out that they delayed their journey two hours later than was their original purpose.

‘But what of that, my good young friend?’ said the Marquis. ‘Your Castle of Wolf’s Crag is but five or six miles’ distance, and will afford the same hospitality to your kinsman of A—— that it gave to this same Sir William Ashton.’

‘Sir William took the castle by storm,’ said Ravenswood, ‘and, like many a victor, had little reason to congratulate himself on his conquest.’

‘Well — well!’ said Lord A——, whose dignity was something relaxed by the wine he had drunk, ‘I see I must bribe you to harbour me. Come, pledge me in a bumper health to the last young lady that slept at Wolf’s Crag, and liked her quarters. My bones are not so tender as hers, and I am resolved to occupy her apartment to-night, that I may judge how hard the couch is that love can soften.’

‘Your lordship may choose what penance you please,’ said Ravenswood; ‘but I assure you, I should expect my old servant to hang himself, or throw himself from the battlements, should your lordship visit him so unexpectedly. I do assure you, we are totally and literally unprovided.’

But his declaration only brought from his noble patron an assurance of his own total indifference as to every species of accommodation, and his determination to see the Tower of Wolf’s Crag. His ancestor, he said, had been feasted there, when he went forward with the then Lord Ravenswood to the fatal battle of Flodden, in which they both fell. Thus hard pressed, the Master offered to ride forward to get matters put in such preparation as time and circumstances admitted; but the Marquis protested his kinsman must afford him his company, and would only consent that an avant-courier should carry to the destined seneschal, Caleb Balderstone, the unexpected news of this invasion.

The Master of Ravenswood soon after accompanied the Marquis in his carriage, as the latter had proposed; and when they became better acquainted in the progress of the journey, his noble relation explained the very liberal views which he entertained for his relation’s preferment, in case of the success of his own political schemes. They related to a secret and highly important commission beyond sea, which could only be entrusted to a person of rank, and talent, and perfect confidence, and which, as it required great trust and reliance on the envoy employed,

could not but prove both honourable and advantageous to him. We need not enter into the nature and purpose of this commission, farther than to acquaint our readers that the charge was in prospect highly acceptable to the Master of Ravenswood, who hailed with pleasure the hope of emerging from his present state of indigence and inaction into independence and honourable exertion.

While he listened thus eagerly to the details with which the Marquis now thought it necessary to entrust him, the messenger who had been despatched to the Tower of Wolf's Crag returned with Caleb Balderstone's humble duty, and an assurance that 'a' should be in seemly order, sic as the hurry of time permitted, to receive their lordships as it behoved.'

Ravenswood was too well accustomed to his seneschal's mode of acting and speaking to hope much from this confident assurance. He knew that Caleb acted upon the principle of the Spanish generals, in the campaign of —, who, much to the perplexity of the Prince of Orange, their commander-in-chief, used to report their troops as full in number, and possessed of all necessary points of equipment, not considering it consistent with their dignity, or the honour of Spain, to confess any deficiency either in men or munition, until the want of both was unavoidably discovered in the day of battle. Accordingly, Ravenswood thought it necessary to give the Marquis some hint that the fair assurance which they had just received from Caleb did not by any means ensure them against a very indifferent reception.

'You do yourself injustice, Master,' said the Marquis, 'or you wish to surprise me agreeably. From this window I see a great light in the direction where, if I remember aright, Wolf's Crag lies; and, to judge from the splendour which the old Tower sheds around it, the preparations for our reception must be of no ordinary description. I remember your father putting the same deception on me, when we went to the Tower for a few days' hawking, about twenty years since, and yet we spent our time as jollily at Wolf's Crag as we could have done at my own hunting seat at B——.'

'Your lordship, I fear, will experience that the faculty of the present proprietor to entertain his friends is greatly abridged,' said Ravenswood; 'the will, I need hardly say, remains the same. But I am as much at a loss as your lordship to account for so strong and brilliant a light as is now above Wolf's Crag; the windows of the Tower are few and



narrow, and those of the lower story are hidden from us by the walls of the court. I cannot conceive that any illumination of an ordinary nature could afford such a blaze of light.'

The mystery was soon explained; for the cavalcade almost instantly halted, and the voice of Caleb Balderstone was heard at the coach window, exclaiming, in accents broken by grief and fear, 'Och, gentlemen! Och, my gude lords! Och, haud to the right! Wolf's Crag is burning, bower and ha' — a' the rich plenishing outside and inside — a' the fine graith, pictures, tapestries, needle-wark, hangings, and other decorements — a' in a bleeze, as if they were nae mair than sae mony peats, or as muckle pease-strae! Haud to the right, gentlemen, I implore ye; there is some sma' provision making at Luckie Sma'trash's; but O, wae for this night, and wae for me that lives to see it!'

Ravenswood was at first stunned by this new and unexpected calamity; but after a moment's recollection he sprang from the carriage, and hastily bidding his noble kinsman good-night, was about to ascend the hill towards the castle, the broad and full conflagration of which now flung forth a high column of red light, that flickered far to seaward upon the dashing waves of the ocean.

'Take a horse, Master,' exclaimed the Marquis, greatly affected by this additional misfortune, so unexpectedly heaped upon his young *protégé*; 'and give me my ambling palfrey; and haste forward, you knaves, to see what can be done to save the furniture, or to extinguish the fire — ride, you knaves, for your lives!'

The attendants bustled together, and began to strike their horses with the spur, and call upon Caleb to show them the road. But the voice of that careful seneschal was heard above the tumult, 'O, stop — sirs, stop — turn bridle, for the love of Mercy; add not loss of lives to the loss of warld's gear! Thirty barrels of powther, landed out of a Dunkirk dogger in the auld lord's time — a' in the vau'ts of the auld tower, the fire canna be far aff it, I trow. Lord's sake, to the right, lads — to the right; let's pit the hill atween us and peril — a wap wi' a corner-stane o' Wolf's Crag wad defy the doctor!'

It will readily be supposed that this annunciation hurried the Marquis and his attendants into the route which Caleb prescribed, dragging Ravenswood along with them, although there was much in the matter which he could not possibly comprehend. 'Gunpowder!' he exclaimed, laying hold of Caleb, who in vain endeavoured to escape from him, 'what gunpowder?

How any quantity of powder could be in Wolf's Crag without my knowledge, I cannot possibly comprehend.'

'But I can,' interrupted the Marquis, whispering him, 'I can comprehend it thoroughly; for God's sake, ask him no more questions at present.'

'There it is, now,' said Caleb, extricating himself from his master, and adjusting his dress, 'your honour will believe his lordship's honourable testimony. His lordship minds weel how, in the year that him they ca'd King Willie died ——'

'Hush! hush, my good friend!' said the Marquis; 'I shall satisfy your master upon that subject.'

'And the people at Wolf's Hope,' said Ravenswood, 'did none of them come to your assistance before the flame got so high?'

'Ay did they, mony ane of them, the rapsCALLIONS!' said Caleb; 'but truly I was in nae hurry to let them into the Tower, where there were so much plate and valuables.'

'Confound you for an impudent liar!' said Ravenswood, in uncontrollable ire, 'there was not a single ounce of ——'

'Forbye,' said the butler, most irreverently raising his voice to a pitch which drowned his master's, 'the fire made fast on us, owing to the store of tapestry and carved timmer in the banqueting-ha', and the loons ran like scauded rats sae sune as they heard of the gunpouter.'

'I do entreat,' said the Marquis to Ravenswood, 'you will ask him no more questions.'

'Only one, my lord. What has become of poor Mysie?'

'Mysie!' said Caleb, 'I had nae time to look about ony Mysie; she's in the Tower, I'se warrant, biding her awful doom.'

'By heaven,' said Ravenswood, 'I do not understand all this! The life of a faithful old creature is at stake; my lord, I will be withheld no longer; I will at least ride up, and see whether the danger is as imminent as this old fool pretends.'

'Weel, then, as I live by bread,' said Caleb, 'Mysie is weel and safe. I saw her out of the castle before I left it mysell. Was I ganging to forget an auld fellow-servant?'

'What made you tell me the contrary this moment?' said his master.

'Did I tell you the contrary?' said Caleb; 'then I maun hae been dreaming surely, or this awsome night has turned my judgment; but safe she is, and ne'er living a soul in the castle, a' the better for them: they wad have gotten an unco heezy.'

The Master of Ravenswood, upon this assurance being solemnly reiterated, and notwithstanding his extreme wish to witness the last explosion, which was to ruin to the ground the mansion of his fathers, suffered himself to be dragged onward towards the village of Wolf's Hope, where not only the change-house, but that of our well-known friend the cooper, were all prepared for reception of himself and his noble guest, with a liberality of provision which requires some explanation.

We omitted to mention in its place, that Lockhard having fished out the truth concerning the mode by which Caleb had obtained the supplies for his banquet, the Lord Keeper, amused with the incident, and desirous at the time to gratify Ravenswood, had recommended the cooper of Wolf's Hope to the official situation under government the prospect of which had reconciled him to the loss of his wild-fowl. Mr. Girder's preferment had occasioned a pleasing surprise to old Caleb; for when, some days after his master's departure, he found himself absolutely compelled, by some necessary business, to visit the fishing hamlet, and was gliding like a ghost past the door of the cooper, for fear of being summoned to give some account of the progress of the solicitation in his favour, or, more probably, that the inmates might upbraid him with the false hope he had held out upon the subject, he heard himself, not without some apprehension, summoned at once in treble, tenor, and bass — a trio performed by the voices of Mrs. Girder, old Dame Loup-the-Dyke, and the goodman of the dwelling — 'Mr. Caleb! — Mr. Caleb! — Mr. Caleb Balderstone! I hope ye arena ganging dry-lipped by our door, and we sae muckle indebted to you?'

This might be said ironically as well as in earnest. Caleb augured the worst, turned a deaf ear to the trio aforesaid, and was moving doggedly on, his ancient castor pulled over his brows, and his eyes bent on the ground, as if to count the flinty pebbles with which the rude pathway was causewayed. But on a sudden he found himself surrounded in his progress, like a stately merchantman in the Gut of Gibraltar (I hope the ladies will excuse the tarpaulin phrase) by three Algerine galleys.

'Gude guide us, Mr. Balderstone!' said Mrs. Girder.

'Wha wad hae thought it of an auld and kenn'd friend!' said the mother.

'And no sae muckle as stay to receive our thanks,' said the cooper himself, 'and frae the like o' me that seldom offers them! I am sure I hope there's nae ill seed sown between us, Mr. Balderstone. Ony man that has said to ye I am no gratefu'

for the situation of Queen's cooper, let me hae a whample at him wi' mine eatche,<sup>1</sup> that's a'.'

'My good friends — my dear friends,' said Caleb, still doubting how the certainty of the matter might stand, 'what needs a' this ceremony? Ane tries to serve their friends, and sometimes they may happen to prosper, and sometimes to misgie. Naething I care to be fashed wi' less than thanks; I never could bide them.'

'Faith, Mr. Balderstone, ye suld hae been fashed wi' few o' mine,' said the downright man of staves and hoops, 'if I had only your gude-will to thank ye for: I suld e'en hae set the guse, and the wild deukes, and the runlet of sack to balance that account. Gude-will, maun, is a geizen'd tub, that hauds in nae liquor; but gude deed's like the cask, tight, round, and sound, that will haud liquor for the king.'

'Have ye no heard of our letter,' said the mother-in-law, 'making our John the Queen's cooper for certain? and scarce a chield that had ever hammered gird upon tub but was applying for it?'

'Have I heard!!!' said Caleb, who now found how the wind set, with an accent of exceeding contempt at the doubt expressed — 'have I heard, quo' she!!!' and as he spoke he changed his shambling, skulking, dodging pace into a manly and authoritative step, readjusted his cocked hat, and suffered his brow to emerge from under it in all the pride of aristocracy, like the sun from behind a cloud.

'To be sure, he canna but hae heard,' said the good woman.

'Ay, to be sure, it's impossible but I should,' said Caleb; 'and sae I'll be the first to kiss ye, joe, and wish you, cooper, much joy of your preferment, naething doubting but ye ken wha are your friends, and *have* helped ye, and *can* help ye. I thought it right to look a wee strange upon it at first,' added Caleb, 'just to see if ye were made of the right mettle; but ye ring true, lad — ye ring true!'

So saying, with a most lordly air he kissed the women, and abandoned his hand, with an air of serene patronage, to the hearty shake of Mr. Girder's horn-hard palm. Upon this complete, and to Caleb most satisfactory, information he did not, it may readily be believed, hesitate to accept an invitation to a solemn feast, to which were invited, not only all the *notables* of the village, but even his ancient antagonist, Mr. Dingwall, himself. At this festivity he was, of course, the most welcome and most honoured guest; and so well did he ply the company

<sup>1</sup> *Anglicè*, adze.

with stories of what he could do with his master, his master with the Lord Keeper, the Lord Keeper with the council, and the council with the king, that before the company dismissed (which was, indeed, rather at an early hour than a late one), every man of note in the village was ascending to the top-gallant of some ideal preferment by the ladder of ropes which Caleb had presented to their imagination. Nay, the cunning butler regained in that moment not only all the influence he possessed formerly over the villagers, when the baronial family which he served were at the proudest, but acquired even an accession of importance. The writer — the very attorney himself, such is the thirst of preferment — felt the force of the attraction, and taking an opportunity to draw Caleb into a corner, spoke, with affectionate regret, of the declining health of the sheriff-clerk of the county.

‘An excellent man — a most valuable man, Mr. Caleb; but fat sall I say! we are peer feckless bodies, here the day and awa’ by cock-screech the morn; and if he failzies, there maun be somebody in his place; and gif that ye could airt it my way, I sall be thankful, man — a gluve stuffed wi’ gowd nobles; an’ hark ye, man, something canny till yoursell, and the Wolf’s Hope carles to settle kindly wi’ the Master of Ravenswood — that is, Lord Ravenswood — God bless his lordship!’

A smile, and a hearty squeeze by the hand, was the suitable answer to this overture; and Caleb made his escape from the jovial party, in order to avoid committing himself by any special promises.

‘The Lord be gude to me,’ said Caleb, when he found himself in the open air, and at liberty to give vent to the self-exultation with which he was, as it were, distended; ‘did ever ony man see sic a set of green-gaislings? The very pick-maws and solangeese out-bye yonder at the Bass hae ten times their sense! God, an I had been the Lord High Commissioner to the Estates o’ Parliament, they couldna hae beflumm’d me mair; and, to speak Heaven’s truth, I could hardly hae beflumm’d them better neither! But the writer — ha! ha! ha! — ah, ha! ha! ha! mercy on me, that I suld live in my auld days to gie the gang-bye to the very writer! Sheriff-clerk!!! But I hae an auld account to settle wi’ the carle; and to make amends for bye-ganes, the office shall just cost him as much time-serving as if he were to get it in gude earnest, of whilk there is sma’ appearance, unless the Master learns mair the ways of this warld, whilk it is muckle to be doubted that he never will do.’



## CHAPTER XXVI

Why flames yon far summit — why shoot to the blast  
Those embers, like stars from the firmament cast ?  
'Tis the fire-shower of ruin, all dreadfully driven  
From thine eyrie, that beacons the darkness of Heaven.

CAMPBELL.

THE circumstances announced in the conclusion of the last chapter will account for the ready and cheerful reception of the Marquis of A—— and the Master of Ravenswood in the village of Wolf's Hope. In fact, Caleb had no sooner announced the conflagration of the tower than the whole hamlet were upon foot to hasten to extinguish the flames. And although that zealous adherent diverted their zeal by intimating the formidable contents of the subterranean apartments, yet the check only turned their assiduity into another direction. Never had there been such slaughtering of capons, and fat geese, and barn-door fowls ; never such boiling of 'reested' hams ; never such making of car-cakes and sweet scones, Selkirk bannocks, cookies, and petticoat-tails — delicacies little known to the present generation. Never had there been such a tapping of barrels, and such uncorking of greybeards, in the village of Wolf's Hope. All the inferior houses were thrown open for the reception of the Marquis's dependants, who came, it was thought, as precursors of the shower of preferment which hereafter was to leave the rest of Scotland dry, in order to distil its rich dews on the village of Wolf's Hope under Lammermoor. The minister put in his claim to have the guests of distinction lodged at the manse, having his eye, it was thought, upon a neighbouring preferment, where the incumbent was sickly ; but Mr. Balderstone destined that honour to the cooper, his wife, and wife's mother, who danced for joy at the preference thus assigned them.

Many a beck and many a bow welcomed these noble guests to as good entertainment as persons of such rank could set

before such visitors ; and the old dame, who had formerly lived in Ravenswood Castle, and knew, as she said, the ways of the nobility, was in no whit wanting in arranging matters, as well as circumstances permitted, according to the etiquette of the times. The cooper's house was so roomy that each guest had his separate retiring-room, to which they were ushered with all due ceremony, while the plentiful supper was in the act of being placed upon the table.

Ravenswood no sooner found himself alone than, impelled by a thousand feelings, he left the apartment, the house, and the village, and hastily retraced his steps to the brow of the hill, which rose betwixt the village and screened it from the tower, in order to view the final fall of the house of his fathers. Some idle boys from the hamlet had taken the same direction out of curiosity, having first witnessed the arrival of the coach and six and its attendants. As they ran one by one past the Master, calling to each other to 'Come and see the auld tower blaw up in the lift like the peelings of an ingan,' he could not but feel himself moved with indignation. 'And these are the sons of my father's vassals,' he said — 'of men bound, both by law and gratitude, to follow our steps through battle, and fire, and flood ; and now the destruction of their liege lord's house is but a holiday's sight to them !'

These exasperating reflections were partly expressed in the acrimony with which he exclaimed, on feeling himself pulled by the cloak — 'What do you want, you dog ?'

'I am a dog, and an auld dog too,' answered Caleb, for it was he who had taken the freedom, 'and I am like to get a dog's wages ; but it does not signification a pinch of sneeshing, for I am ower auld a dog to learn new tricks, or to follow a new master.'

As he spoke, Ravenswood attained the ridge of the hill from which Wolf's Crag was visible ; the flames had entirely sunk down, and, to his great surprise, there was only a dusky reddening upon the clouds immediately over the castle, which seemed the reflection of the embers of the sunken fire.

'The place cannot have blown up,' said the Master ; 'we must have heard the report : if a quarter of the gunpowder was there you tell me of, it would have been heard twenty miles off.'

'It's very like it wad,' said Balderstone, composedly.

'Then the fire cannot have reached the vaults ?'

'It's like no,' answered Caleb, with the same impenetrable gravity.

'Hark ye, Caleb,' said his master, 'this grows a little too much for my patience. I must go and examine how matters stand at Wolf's Crag myself.'

'Your honour is ganging to gang nae sic gate,' said Caleb, firmly.

'And why not?' said Ravenswood, sharply; 'who or what shall prevent me?'

'Even I mysell,' said Caleb, with the same determination.

'You, Balderstone!' replied the Master; 'you are forgetting yourself, I think.'

'But I think no,' said Balderstone; 'for I can just tell ye a' about the castle on this knowe-head as weel as if ye were at it. Only dinna pit yoursell into a kippage, and expose yoursell before the weans, or before the Marquis, when ye gang down-bye.'

'Speak out, you old fool,' replied his master, 'and let me know the best and the worst at once.'

'Ou, the best and the warst is, just that the tower is standing haill and feir, as safe and as empty as when ye left it.'

'Indeed! and the fire?' said Ravenswood.

'Not a gleed of fire, then, except the bit kindling peat, and maybe a spunk in Mysie's cutty-pipe,' replied Caleb.

'But the flame?' demanded Ravenswood — 'the broad blaze which might have been seen ten miles off — what occasioned that?'

'Hout awa'! it's an auld saying and a true —

Little's the light  
Will be seen in a mirk night.

A wheen fern and horse litter that I fired in the courtyard, after sending back the loon of a footman; and, to speak Heaven's truth, the next time that ye send or bring ony body here, let them be gentles allenarly, without ony fremd servants, like that chield Lockhard, to be gledging and gleeing about, and looking upon the wrang side of ane's housekeeping, to the discredit of the family, and forcing ane to damn their souls wi' telling ae lee after another faster than I can count them: I wad rather set fire to the tower in gude earnest, and burn it ower my ain head into the bargain, or I see the family dishonoured in the sort.'

'Upon my word, I am infinitely obliged by the proposal, Caleb,' said his master, scarce able to restrain his laughter, though rather angry at the same time. 'But the gunpowder — is there such a thing in the tower? The Marquis seemed to know of it.'

'The pouter, ha! ha! ha! — the Marquis, ha! ha! ha!' replied Caleb, — 'if your honour were to brain me, I behooved to laugh, — the Marquis — the pouter! Was it there? Ay, it was there. Did he ken o't? My certie! the Marquis kenn'd o't, and it was the best o' the game; for, when I couldna pacify your honour wi' a' that I could say, I aye threw out a word mair about the gunpouter, and garr'd the Marquis tak the job in his ain hand.'

'But you have not answered my question,' said the Master, impatiently; 'how came the powder there, and where is it now?'

'Ou, it came there, and ye maun needs ken,' said Caleb, looking mysteriously, and whispering, 'when there was like to be a wee bit rising here; and the Marquis, and a' the great lords of the north, were a' in it, and mony a gudely gun and broadsword were ferried ower frae Dunkirk forbye the pouter. Awfu' wark we had getting them into the tower under cloud o' night, for ye maun think it wasna everybody could be trusted wi' sic kittle jobs. But if ye will gae hame to your supper, I will tell you a' about it as ye gang down.'

'And these wretched boys,' said Ravenswood, 'is it your pleasure they are to sit there all night, to wait for the blowing up of a tower that is not even on fire?'

'Surely not, if it is your honour's pleasure that they suld gang hame; although,' added Caleb, 'it wadna do them a grain's damage: they wad screigh less the next day, and sleep the sounder at e'en. But just as your honour likes.'

Stepping accordingly towards the urchins who manned the knolls near which they stood, Caleb informed them, in an authoritative tone, that their honours Lord Ravenswood and the Marquis of A—— had given orders that the tower was not to blow up till next day at noon. The boys dispersed upon this comfortable assurance. One or two, however, followed Caleb for more information, particularly the urchin whom he had cheated while officiating as turnspit, who screamed, 'Mr. Balderstone! — Mr. Balderstone! then the castle's gane out like an auld wife's spunk?'

'To be sure it is, callant,' said the butler; 'do ye think the castle of as great a lord as Lord Ravenswood wad continue in a bleeze, and him standing looking on wi' his ain very een? It's aye right,' continued Caleb, shaking off his ragged page, and closing in to his master, 'to train up weans, as the wise man says, in the way they should go, and, aboon a', to teach them respect to their superiors.'

‘But all this while, Caleb, you have never told me what became of the arms and the powder,’ said Ravenswood.

‘Why, as for the arms,’ said Caleb, ‘it was just like the bairns’ rhyme—

Some gaed east and some gaed west,  
And some gaed to the crow’s nest.

And for the pouter, I e’en changed it, as occasion served, with the skippers o’ Dutch luggers and French vessels, for gin and brandy, and it served the house mony a year—a gude swap too, between what cheereth the soul of man and that which dingeth it clean out of his body; forbye, I keepit a wheen pounds of it for yoursell when ye wanted to take the pleasure o’ shooting: whiles, in these latter days, I wad hardly hae kenn’d else whar to get pouter for your pleasure. And now that your anger is ower, sir, wasna that weel managed o’ me, and arena ye far better sorted down yonder than ye could hae been in your ain auld ruins up-bye yonder, as the case stands wi’ us now? the mair’s the pity!’

‘I believe you may be right, Caleb; but, before burning down my castle, either in jest or in earnest,’ said Ravenswood, ‘I think I had a right to be in the secret.’

‘Fie for shame, your honour!’ replied Caleb; ‘it fits an auld carle like me weel enough to tell lees for the credit of the family, but it wadna beseem the like o’ your honour’s sell; besides, young folk are no judicious: they cannot make the maist of a bit figment. Now this fire—for a fire it sall be, if I suld burn the auld stable to make it mair feasible—this fire, besides that it will be an excuse for asking ony thing we want through the country, or down at the haven—this fire will settle mony things on an honourable footing for the family’s credit, that cost me telling twenty daily lees to a wheen idle chaps and queans, and, what’s waur, without gaining credence.’

‘That was hard indeed, Caleb; but I do not see how this fire should help your veracity or your credit.’

‘There it is now!’ said Caleb; ‘wasna I saying that young folk had a green judgment? How suld it help me, quotha? It will be a creditable apology for the honour of the family for this score of years to come, if it is weel guided. “Where’s the family pictures?” says ae meddling body. “The great fire at Wolf’s Crag,” answers I. “Where’s the family plate?” says another. “The great fire,” says I; “wha was to think of plate, when life and limb were in danger?” “Where’s the wardrobe



and the linens? — where's the tapestries and the decorements? — beds of state, twilts, pands and testors, napery and broidered wark?" "The fire — the fire — the fire." Guide the fire weel, and it will serve ye for a' that ye suld have and have not; and, in some sort, a gude excuse is better than the things themselves; for they maun crack and wear out, and be consumed by time, whereas a good offcome, prudently and comfortably handled, may serve a nobleman and his family, Lord kens how lang!'

Ravenswood was too well acquainted with his butler's pertinacity and self-opinion to dispute the point with him any farther. Leaving Caleb, therefore, to the enjoyment of his own successful ingenuity, he returned to the hamlet, where he found the Marquis and the good women of the mansion under some anxiety — the former on account of his absence, the others for the discredit their cookery might sustain by the delay of the supper. All were now at ease, and heard with pleasure that the fire at the castle had burned out of itself without reaching the vaults, which was the only information that Ravenswood thought it proper to give in public concerning the event of his butler's stratagem.

They sat down to an excellent supper. No invitation could prevail on Mr. and Mrs. Girder, even in their own house, to sit down at table with guests of such high quality. They remained standing in the apartment, and acted the part of respectful and careful attendants on the company. Such were the manners of the time. The elder dame, confident through her age and connexion with the Ravenswood family, was less scrupulously ceremonious. She played a mixed part betwixt that of the hostess of an inn and the mistress of a private house, who receives guests above her own degree. She recommended, and even pressed, what she thought best, and was herself easily entreated to take a moderate share of the good cheer, in order to encourage her guests by her own example. Often she interrupted herself, to express her regret that 'my lord did not eat; that the Master was pyking a bare bane; that, to be sure, there was naething there fit to set before their honours; that Lord Allan, rest his saul, used to like a pouthered guse, and said it was Latin for a tass o' brandy; that the brandy came frae France direct; for, for a' the English laws and gaugers, the Wolf's Hope brigs hadna forgotten the gate to Dunkirk.'

Here the cooper admonished his mother-in-law with his elbow, which procured him the following special notice in the progress of her speech:

'Ye needna be dunshin that gate, John,' continued the old lady; 'naebody says that *ye* ken whar the brandy comes frae; and it wadna be fitting ye should, and you the Queen's cooper; and what signifies 't,' continued she, addressing Lord Ravenswood, 'to king, queen, or kaiser whar an auld wife like me buys her pickle sneeshin, or her drap brandy-wine, to haud her heart up?'

Having thus extricated herself from her supposed false step, Dame Loup-the-Dyke proceeded, during the rest of the evening, to supply, with great animation, and very little assistance from her guests, the funds necessary for the support of the conversation, until, declining any further circulation of their glass, her guests requested her permission to retire to their apartments.

The Marquis occupied the chamber of dais, which, in every house above the rank of a mere cottage, was kept sacred for such high occasions as the present. The modern finishing with plaster was then unknown, and tapestry was confined to the houses of the nobility and superior gentry. The cooper, therefore, who was a man of some vanity, as well as some wealth, had imitated the fashion observed by the inferior landholders and clergy, who usually ornamented their state apartments with hangings of a sort of stamped leather, manufactured in the Netherlands, garnished with trees and animals executed in copper foil, and with many a pithy sentence of morality, which, although couched in Low Dutch, were perhaps as much attended to in practice as if written in broad Scotch. The whole had somewhat of a gloomy aspect; but the fire, composed of old pitch-barrel staves, blazed merrily up the chimney; the bed was decorated with linen of most fresh and dazzling whiteness, which had never before been used, and might, perhaps, have never been used at all, but for this high occasion. On the toilette beside, stood an old-fashioned mirror, in a fillagree frame, part of the dispersed finery of the neighbouring castle. It was flanked by a long-necked bottle of Florence wine, by which stood a glass nearly as tall, resembling in shape that which Teniers usually places in the hands of his own portrait, when he paints himself as mingling in the revels of a country village. To counterbalance those foreign sentinels, there mounted guard on the other side of the mirror two stout warders of Scottish lineage; a jug, namely, of double ale, which held a Scotch pint, and a quaigh, or bicker, of ivory and ebony, hooped with silver, the work of John Girder's own hands, and the pride of his heart. Besides these preparations against

thirst, there was a goodly diet-loaf, or sweet cake ; so that, with such auxiliaries, the apartment seemed victualled against a siege of two or three days.

It only remains to say, that the Marquis's valet was in attendance, displaying his master's brocaded nightgown, and richly embroidered velvet cap, lined and faced with Brussels lace, upon a huge leathern easy-chair, wheeled round so as to have the full advantage of the comfortable fire which we have already mentioned. We therefore commit that eminent person to his night's repose, trusting he profited by the ample preparations made for his accommodation — preparations which we have mentioned in detail, as illustrative of ancient Scottish manners.

It is not necessary we should be equally minute in describing the sleeping apartment of the Master of Ravenswood, which was that usually occupied by the goodman and goodwife themselves. It was comfortably hung with a sort of warm-coloured worsted, manufactured in Scotland, approaching in texture to what is now called shalloon. A staring picture of John Girder himself ornamented this domitory, painted by a starving Frenchman, who had, God knows how or why, strolled over from Flushing or Dunkirk to Wolf's Hope in a smuggling dogger. The features were, indeed, those of the stubborn, opinionative, yet sensible artisan, but Monsieur had contrived to throw a French grace into the look and manner, so utterly inconsistent with the dogged gravity of the original, that it was impossible to look at it without laughing. John and his family, however, piqued themselves not a little upon this picture, and were proportionably censured by the neighbourhood, who pronounced that the cooper, in sitting for the same, and yet more in presuming to hang it up in his bedchamber, had exceeded his privilege as the richest man of the village ; at once stepped beyond the bounds of his own rank, and encroached upon those of the superior orders ; and, in fine, had been guilty of a very overweening act of vanity and presumption. Respect for the memory of my deceased friend, Mr. Richard Tinto, has obliged me to treat this matter at some length ; but I spare the reader his prolix though curious observations, as well upon the character of the French school as upon the state of painting in Scotland at the beginning of the 18th century.

The other preparations of the Master's sleeping apartment were similar to those in the chamber of dais.

At the usual early hour of that period, the Marquis of

A—— and his kinsman prepared to resume their journey. This could not be done without an ample breakfast, in which cold meat and hot meat, and oatmeal flummery, wine and spirits, and milk varied by every possible mode of preparation, evinced the same desire to do honour to their guests which had been shown by the hospitable owners of the mansion upon the evening before. All the bustle of preparation for departure now resounded through Wolf's Hope. There was paying of bills and shaking of hands, and saddling of horses, and harnessing of carriages, and distributing of drink-money. The Marquis left a broad piece for the gratification of John Girder's household, which he, the said John, was for some time disposed to convert to his own use; Dingwall, the writer, assuring him he was justified in so doing, seeing he was the disburser of those expenses which were the occasion of the gratification. But, notwithstanding this legal authority, John could not find in his heart to dim the splendour of his late hospitality by pocketing anything in the nature of a gratuity. He only assured his menials he would consider them as a damned ungrateful pack if they bought a gill of brandy elsewhere than out of his own stores; and as the drink-money was likely to go to its legitimate use, he comforted himself that, in this manner, the Marquis's donative would, without any impeachment of credit and character, come ultimately into his own exclusive possession.

While arrangements were making for departure, Ravenswood made blithe the heart of his ancient butler by informing him, cautiously however (for he knew Caleb's warmth of imagination), of the probable change which was about to take place in his fortunes. He deposited with Balderstone, at the same time, the greater part of his slender funds, with an assurance, which he was obliged to reiterate more than once, that he himself had sufficient supplies in certain prospect. He therefore enjoined Caleb, as he valued his favour, to desist from all farther manœuvres against the inhabitants of Wolf's Hope, their cellars, poultry-yards, and substance whatsoever. In this prohibition, the old domestic acquiesced more readily than his master expected.

'It was doubtless,' he said, 'a shame, a discredit, and a sin to harry the poor creatures, when the family were in circumstances to live honourably on their ain means; and there might be wisdom,' he added, 'in giving them a while's breathing-time at any rate, that they might be the more readily brought forward upon his honour's future occasions.'

This matter being settled, and having taken an affectionate farewell of his old domestic, the Master rejoined his noble relative, who was now ready to enter his carriage. The two landladies, old and young, having received in all kindly greeting a kiss from each of their noble guests, stood simpering at the door of their house, as the coach and six, followed by its train of clattering horsemen, thundered out of the village. John Girder also stood upon his threshold, now looking at his honoured right hand, which had been so lately shaken by a marquis and a lord, and now giving a glance into the interior of his mansion, which manifested all the disarray of the late revel, as if balancing the distinction which he had attained with the expenses of the entertainment.

At length he opened his oracular jaws. 'Let every man and woman here set about their ain business, as if there was nae sic thing as marquis or master, duke or drake, laird or lord, in this world. Let the house be redd up, the broken meat set bye, and if there is ony thing totally uneatable, let it be gien to the puir folk; and, gudemother and wife, I hae just ae thing to entreat ye, that ye will never speak to me a single word, good or bad, anent a' this nonsense wark, but keep a' your cracks about it to yoursells and your kimmers, for my head is weel-nigh dung donnart wi' it already.'

As John's authority was tolerably absolute, all departed to their usual occupations, leaving him to build castles in the air, if he had a mind, upon the court favour which he had acquired by the expenditure of his worldly substance.



## CHAPTER XXVII

Why, now I have Dame Fortune by the forelock,  
And if she escapes my grasp, the fault is mine;  
He that hath buffeted with stern adversity  
Best knows to shape his course to favouring breezes.

*Old Play.*

OUR travellers reached Edinburgh without any farther adventure, and the Master of Ravenswood, as had been previously settled, took up his abode with his noble friend.

In the meantime, the political crisis which had been expected took place, and the Tory party obtained in the Scottish, as in the English, councils of Queen Anne a short-lived ascendancy, of which it is not our business to trace either the cause or consequences. Suffice it to say, that it affected the different political parties according to the nature of their principles. In England, many of the High Church party, with Harley, afterwards Earl of Oxford, at their head, affected to separate their principles from those of the Jacobites, and, on that account, obtained the denomination of Whimsicals. The Scottish High Church party, on the contrary, or, as they termed themselves, the Cavaliers, were more consistent, if not so prudent, in their politics, and viewed all the changes now made as preparatory to calling to the throne, upon the queen's demise, her brother, the Chevalier de St. George. Those who had suffered in his service now entertained the most unreasonable hopes, not only of indemnification, but of vengeance upon their political adversaries; while families attached to the Whig interest saw nothing before them but a renewal of the hardships they had undergone during the reigns of Charles the Second and his brother, and a retaliation of the confiscation which had been inflicted upon the Jacobites during that of King William.

But the most alarmed at the change of system was that prudential set of persons, some of whom are found in all govern-

ments, but who abound in a provincial administration like that of Scotland during the period, and who are what Cromwell called waiters upon Providence, or, in other words, uniform adherents to the party who are uppermost. Many of these hastened to read their recantation to the Marquis of A——; and, as it was easily seen that he took a deep interest in the affairs of his kinsman, the Master of Ravenswood, they were the first to suggest measures for retrieving at least a part of his property, and for restoring him in blood against his father's attainer.

Old Lord Turntippet professed to be one of the most anxious for the success of these measures; for 'it grieved him to the very saul,' he said, 'to see so brave a young gentleman, of sic auld and undoubted nobility, and, what was mair than a' that, a bluid relation of the Marquis of A——, the man whom,' he swore, 'he honoured most upon the face of the yearth, brought to so severe a pass. For his ain puir peculiar,' as he said, 'and to contribute something to the rehabilitation of sae auld ane house,' the said Turntippit sent in three family pictures lacking the frames, and six high-backed chairs, with worked Turkey cushions, having the crest of Ravenswood broidered thereon, without charging a penny either of the principal or interest they had cost him, when he bought them, sixteen years before, at a roup of the furniture of Lord Ravenswood's lodgings in the Canongate.

Much more to Lord Turntippet's dismay than to his surprise, although he affected to feel more of the latter than the former, the Marquis received his gift very drily, and observed, that his lordship's restitution, if he expected it to be received by the Master of Ravenswood and his friends, must comprehend a pretty large farm, which, having been mortgaged to Turntippet for a very inadequate sum, he had contrived, during the confusion of the family affairs, and by means well understood by the lawyers of that period, to acquire to himself in absolute property.

The old time-serving lord winced excessively under this requisition, protesting to God, that he saw no occasion the lad could have for the instant possession of the land, seeing he would doubtless now recover the bulk of his estate from Sir William Ashton, to which he was ready to contribute by every means in his power, as was just and reasonable; and finally declaring, that he was willing to settle the land on the young gentleman after his own natural demise.

But all these excuses availed nothing, and he was compelled

to disgorge the property, on receiving back the sum for which it had been mortgaged. Having no other means of making peace with the higher powers, he returned home sorrowful and malcontent, complaining to his confidants, 'That every mutation or change in the state had hitherto been productive of some sma' advantage to him in his ain quiet affairs; but that the present had — pize upon it! — cost him one of the best pen-feathers o' his wing.'

Similar measures were threatened against others who had profited by the wreck of the fortune of Ravenswood; and Sir William Ashton, in particular, was menaced with an appeal to the House of Peers, against the judicial sentences, under which he held the castle and barony of Ravenswood. With him, however, the Master, as well for Lucy's sake as on account of the hospitality he had received from him, felt himself under the necessity of proceeding with great candour. He wrote to the late Lord Keeper, for he no longer held that office, stating frankly the engagement which existed between him and Miss Ashton, requesting his permission for their union, and assuring him of his willingness to put the settlement of all matters between them upon such a footing as Sir William himself should think favourable.

The same messenger was charged with a letter to Lady Ashton, deprecating any cause of displeasure which the Master might unintentionally have given her, enlarging upon his attachment to Miss Ashton, and the length to which it had proceeded, and conjuring the lady, as a Douglas in nature as well as in name, generously to forget ancient prejudices and misunderstandings, and to believe that the family had acquired a friend, and she herself a respectful and attached humble servant, in him who subscribed himself 'Edgar, Master of Ravenswood.'

A third letter Ravenswood addressed to Lucy, and the messenger was instructed to find some secret and secure means of delivering it into her own hands. It contained the strongest protestations of continued affection, and dwelt upon the approaching change of the writer's fortunes, as chiefly valuable by tending to remove the impediments to their union. He related the steps he had taken to overcome the prejudices of her parents, and especially of her mother, and expressed his hopes they might prove effectual. If not, he still trusted that his absence from Scotland upon an important and honourable mission might give time for prejudices to die away; while he hoped and

trusted Miss Ashton's constancy, on which he had the most implicit reliance, would baffle any effort that might be used to divert her attachment. Much more there was, which, however interesting to the lovers themselves, would afford the reader neither interest nor information. To each of these three letters the Master of Ravenswood received an answer, but by different means of conveyance, and certainly couched in very different styles.

Lady Ashton answered his letter by his own messenger, who was not allowed to remain at Ravenswood a moment longer than she was engaged in penning these lines. 'For the hand of Mr. Ravenswood of Wolf's Crag — These :

'SIR, UNKNOWN,

'I have received a letter, signed "Edgar, Master of Ravenswood," concerning the writer whereof I am uncertain, seeing that the honours of such a family were forfeited for high treason in the person of Allan, late Lord Ravenswood. Sir, if you shall happen to be the person so subscribing yourself, you will please to know, that I claim the full interest of a parent in Miss Lucy Ashton, which I have disposed of irrevocably in behalf of a worthy person. And, sir, were this otherwise, I would not listen to a proposal from you, or any of your house, seeing their hand has been uniformly held up against the freedom of the subject and the immunities of God's kirk. Sir, it is not a flightering blink of prosperity which can change my constant opinion in this regard, seeing it has been my lot before now, like holy David, to see the wicked great in power and flourishing like a green bay-tree ; nevertheless I passed, and they were not, and the place thereof knew them no more. Wishing you to lay these things to your heart for your own sake, so far as they may concern you, I pray you to take no farther notice of her who desires to remain your unknown servant,

'MARGARET DOUGLAS,

'otherwise ASHTON.'

About two days after he had received this very unsatisfactory epistle, the Master of Ravenswood, while walking up the High Street of Edinburgh, was jostled by a person, in whom, as the man pulled off his hat to make an apology, he recognised Lockhard, the confidential domestic of Sir William Ashton. The man bowed, slipt a letter into his hand, and disappeared. The packet contained four close-written folios, from which, however,

as is sometimes incident to the compositions of great lawyers, little could be extracted, excepting that the writer felt himself in a very puzzling predicament.

Sir William spoke at length of his high value and regard for his dear young friend, the Master of Ravenswood, and of his very extreme high value and regard for the Marquis of A——, his very dear old friend; he trusted that any measures that they might adopt, in which he was concerned, would be carried on with due regard to the sanctity of decreets and judgments obtained *in foro contentioso*; protesting, before men and angels, that if the law of Scotland, as declared in her supreme courts, were to undergo a reversal in the English House of Lords, the evils which would thence arise to the public would inflict a greater wound upon his heart than any loss he might himself sustain by such irregular proceedings. He flourished much on generosity and forgiveness of mutual injuries, and hinted at the mutability of human affairs, always favourite topics with the weaker party in politics. He pathetically lamented, and gently censured, the haste which had been used in depriving him of his situation of Lord Keeper,<sup>1</sup> which his experience had enabled him to fill with some advantage to the public, without so much as giving him an opportunity of explaining how far his own views of general politics might essentially differ from those now in power. He was convinced the Marquis of A—— had as sincere intentions toward the public as himself or any man; and if, upon a conference, they could have agreed upon the measures by which it was to be pursued, his experience and his interest should have gone to support the present administration. Upon the engagement betwixt Ravenswood and his daughter, he spoke in a dry and confused manner. He regretted so premature a step as the engagement of the young people should have been taken, and conjured the Master to remember he had never given any encouragement thereunto; and observed that, as a transaction *inter minores*, and without concurrence of his daughter's natural curators, the engagement was inept, and void in law. This precipitate measure, he added, had produced a very bad effect upon Lady Ashton's mind, which it was impossible at present to remove. Her son, Colonel Douglas Ashton, had embraced her prejudices in the fullest extent, and it was impossible for Sir William to adopt a course disagreeable to them without a fatal and irreconcilable breach in his family;

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<sup>1</sup> This obviously cannot apply to Sir James Dalrymple, Lord Stair, who was then dead, and had never been deprived of any such office (*Lainy*).



which was not at present to be thought of. Time, the great physician, he hoped, would mend all.

In a postscript, Sir William said something more explicitly, which seemed to intimate that, rather than the law of Scotland should sustain a severe wound through his sides, by a reversal of the judgment of her supreme courts, in the case of the barony of Ravenswood, through the intervention of what, with all submission, he must term a foreign court of appeal, he himself would extrajudicially consent to considerable sacrifices.

From Lucy Ashton, by some unknown conveyance, the Master received the following lines :— ‘I received yours, but it was at the utmost risk ; do not attempt to write again till better times. I am sore beset, but I will be true to my word, while the exercise of my reason is vouchsafed to me. That you are happy and prosperous is some consolation, and my situation requires it all.’ The note was signed ‘L. A.’

This letter filled Ravenswood with the most lively alarm. He made many attempts, notwithstanding her prohibition, to convey letters to Miss Ashton, and even to obtain an interview ; but his plans were frustrated, and he had only the mortification to learn that anxious and effectual precautions had been taken to prevent the possibility of their correspondence. The Master was the more distressed by these circumstances, as it became impossible to delay his departure from Scotland, upon the important mission which had been confided to him. Before his departure, he put Sir William Ashton’s letter into the hands of the Marquis of A——, who observed with a smile, that Sir William’s day of grace was past, and that he had now to learn which side of the hedge the sun had got to. It was with the greatest difficulty that Ravenswood extorted from the Marquis a promise that he would compromise the proceedings in Parliament, providing Sir William should be disposed to acquiesce in a union between him and Lucy Ashton.

‘I would hardly,’ said the Marquis, ‘consent to your throwing away your birthright in this manner, were I not perfectly confident that Lady Ashton, or Lady Douglas, or whatever she calls herself, will, as Scotchmen say, keep her threep ; and that her husband dares not contradict her.’

‘But yet,’ said the Master, ‘I trust your lordship will consider my engagement as sacred.’

‘Believe my word of honour,’ said the Marquis, ‘I would be a friend even to your follies ; and having thus told you *my*

opinion, I will endeavour, as occasion offers, to serve you according to your own.'

The Master of Ravenswood could but thank his generous kinsman and patron, and leave him full power to act in all his affairs. He departed from Scotland upon his mission, which, it was supposed, might detain him upon the continent for some months.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

Was ever woman in this humour wooed ?

Was ever woman in this humour won ?

I'll have her.

*Richard III.*

**T**WELVE months had passed away since the Master of Ravenswood's departure for the continent, and, although his return to Scotland had been expected in a much shorter space, yet the affairs of his mission, or, according to a prevailing report, others of a nature personal to himself, still detained him abroad. In the meantime, the altered state of affairs in Sir William Ashton's family may be gathered from the following conversation which took place betwixt Bucklaw and his confidential bottle companion and dependant, the noted Captain Craigengelt.

They were seated on either side of the huge sepulchral-looking freestone chimney in the low hall at Girnington. A wood fire blazed merrily in the grate; a round oaken table, placed between them, supported a stoup of excellent claret, two rummer glasses, and other good cheer; and yet, with all these appliances and means to boot, the countenance of the patron was dubious, doubtful, and unsatisfied, while the invention of his dependant was taxed to the utmost to parry what he most dreaded, a fit, as he called it, of the sullens, on the part of his protector. After a long pause, only interrupted by the devil's tattoo, which Bucklaw kept beating against the hearth with the toe of his boot, Craigengelt at last ventured to break silence. 'May I be double distanced,' said he, 'if ever I saw a man in my life have less the air of a bridegroom! Cut me out of feather, if you have not more the look of a man condemned to be hanged!'

'My kind thanks for the compliment,' replied Bucklaw; 'but I suppose you think upon the predicament in which you yourself are most likely to be placed; and pray, Captain Craigengelt, if it please your worship, why should I look merry, when I'm sad, and devilish sad too?'

‘And that’s what vexes me,’ said Craingengtelt. ‘Here is this match, the best in the whole country, and which you were so anxious about, is on the point of being concluded, and you are as sulky as a bear that has lost its whelps.’

‘I do not know,’ answered the Laird, doggedly, ‘whether I should conclude it or not, if it was not that I am too far forwards to leap back.’

‘Leap back!’ exclaimed Craingengtelt, with a well-assumed air of astonishment, ‘that would be playing the back-game with a witness! Leap back! Why, is not the girl’s fortune ——’

‘The young lady’s, if you please,’ said Hayston, interrupting him.

‘Well — well, no disrespect meant. Will Miss Ashton’s tocher not weigh against any in Lothian?’

‘Granted,’ answered Bucklaw; ‘but I care not a penny for her tocher; I have enough of my own.’

‘And the mother, that loves you like her own child?’

‘Better than some of her children, I believe,’ said Bucklaw, ‘or there would be little love wared on the matter.’

‘And Colonel Sholto Douglas Ashton, who desires the marriage above all earthly things?’

‘Because,’ said Bucklaw, ‘he expects to carry the county of —— through my interest.’

‘And the father, who is as keen to see the match concluded as ever I have been to win a main?’

‘Ay,’ said Bucklaw, in the same disparaging manner, ‘it lies with Sir William’s policy to secure the next best match, since he cannot barter his child to save the great Ravenswood estate, which the English House of Lords are about to wrench out of his clutches.’

‘What say you to the young lady herself?’ said Craingengtelt; ‘the finest young woman in all Scotland, one that you used to be so fond of when she was cross, and now she consents to have you, and gives up her engagement with Ravenswood, you are for jibbing. I must say, the devil’s in ye, when ye neither know what you would have nor what you would want.’

‘I’ll tell you my meaning in a word,’ answered Bucklaw, getting up and walking through the room; ‘I want to know what the devil is the cause of Miss Ashton’s changing her mind so suddenly?’

‘And what need you care,’ said Craingengtelt, ‘since the change is in your favour?’

‘I’ll tell you what it is,’ returned his patron, ‘I never knew much of that sort of fine ladies, and I believe they may be as capricious as the devil; but there is something in Miss Ashton’s change a devilish deal too sudden and too serious for a mere flisk of her own. I’ll be bound, Lady Ashton understands every machine for breaking in the human mind, and there are as many as there are cannon-bits, martingales, and cavessons for young colts.’

‘And if that were not the case,’ said Craigengelt, ‘how the devil should we ever get them into training at all?’

‘And that’s true too,’ said Bucklaw, suspending his march through the dining-room, and leaning upon the back of a chair. ‘And besides, here’s Ravenswood in the way still; do you think he’ll give up Lucy’s engagement?’

‘To be sure he will,’ answered Craigengelt; ‘what good can it do him to refuse, since he wishes to marry another woman and she another man?’

‘And you believe seriously,’ said Bucklaw, ‘that he is going to marry the foreign lady we heard of?’

‘You heard yourself,’ answered Craigengelt, ‘what Captain Westenho said about it, and the great preparation made for their blithesome bridal.’

‘Captain Westenho,’ replied Bucklaw, ‘has rather too much of your own cast about him, Craigie, to make what Sir William would call a “famous witness.” He drinks deep, plays deep, swears deep, and I suspect can lie and cheat a little into the bargain; useful qualities, Craigie, if kept in their proper sphere, but which have a little too much of the freebooter to make a figure in a court of evidence.’

‘Well, then,’ said Craigengelt, ‘will you believe Colonel Douglas Ashton, who heard the Marquis of A—— say in a public circle, but not aware that he was within ear-shot, that his kinsman had made a better arrangement for himself than to give his father’s land for the pale-cheeked daughter of a broken-down fanatic, and that Bucklaw was welcome to the wearing of Ravenswood’s shaughled shoes.’

‘Did he say so, by heavens!’ cried Bucklaw, breaking out into one of those uncontrollable fits of passion to which he was constitutionally subject; ‘if I had heard him, I would have torn the tongue out of his throat before all his pets and minions, and Highland bullies into the bargain. Why did not Ashton run him through the body?’

‘Capot me if I know,’ said the Captain. ‘He deserved it



sure enough ; but he is an old man, and a minister of state, and there would be more risk than credit in meddling with him. You had more need to think of making up to Miss Lucy Ashton the disgrace that 's like to fall upon her than of interfering with a man too old to fight, and on too high a stool for your hand to reach him.'

'It *shall* reach him, though, one day,' said Bucklaw, 'and his kinsman Ravenswood to boot. In the meantime, I'll take care Miss Ashton receives no discredit for the slight they have put upon her. It's an awkward job, however, and I wish it were ended ; I scarce know how to talk to her, — but fill a bumper, Craigie, and we'll drink her health. It grows late, and a night-cowl of good claret is worth all the considering caps in Europe.'

## CHAPTER XXIX

It was the copy of our conference.  
In bed she slept not, for my urging it ;  
At board she fed not, for my urging it ;  
Alone, it was the subject of my theme ;  
In company I often glanced at it.

*Comedy of Errors.*

THE next morning saw Bucklaw and his faithful Achates, Craigengelt, at Ravenswood Castle. They were most courteously received by the knight and his lady, as well as by their son and heir, Colonel Ashton. After a good deal of stammering and blushing — for Bucklaw, notwithstanding his audacity in other matters, had all the sheepish bashfulness common to those who have lived little in respectable society — he contrived at length to explain his wish to be admitted to a conference with Miss Ashton upon the subject of their approaching union. Sir William and his son looked at Lady Ashton, who replied with the greatest composure, ‘That Lucy would wait upon Mr. Hayston directly. I hope,’ she added with a smile, ‘that as Lucy is very young, and has been lately trepanned into an engagement of which she is now heartily ashamed, our dear Bucklaw will excuse her wish that I should be present at their interview ?’

‘In truth, my dear lady,’ said Bucklaw, ‘it is the very thing that I would have desired on my own account ; for I have been so little accustomed to what is called gallantry, that I shall certainly fall into some cursed mistake unless I have the advantage of your ladyship as an interpreter.’

It was thus that Bucklaw, in the perturbation of his embarrassment upon this critical occasion, forgot the just apprehensions he had entertained of Lady Ashton’s overbearing ascendancy over her daughter’s mind, and lost an opportunity of ascertaining, by his own investigation, the real state of Lucy’s feelings.

The other gentlemen left the room, and in a short time Lady

Ashton, followed by her daughter, entered the apartment. She appeared, as he had seen her on former occasions, rather composed than agitated; but a nicer judge than he could scarce have determined whether her calmness was that of despair or of indifference. Bucklaw was too much agitated by his own feelings minutely to scrutinise those of the lady. He stammered out an unconnected address, confounding together the two or three topics to which it related, and stopt short before he brought it to any regular conclusion. Miss Ashton listened, or looked as if she listened, but returned not a single word in answer, continuing to fix her eyes on a small piece of embroidery on which, as if by instinct or habit, her fingers were busily employed. Lady Ashton sat at some distance, almost screened from notice by the deep embrasure of the window in which she had placed her chair. From this she whispered, in a tone of voice which, though soft and sweet, had something in it of admonition, if not command — ‘Lucy, my dear, remember — have you heard what Bucklaw has been saying?’

The idea of her mother’s presence seemed to have slipped from the unhappy girl’s recollection. She started, dropped her needle, and repeated hastily, and almost in the same breath, the contradictory answers, ‘Yes, madam — no, my lady — I beg pardon, I did not hear.’

‘You need not blush, my love, and still less need you look so pale and frightened,’ said Lady Ashton, coming forward; ‘we know that maiden’s ears must be slow in receiving a gentleman’s language; but you must remember Mr. Hayston speaks on a subject on which you have long since agreed to give him a favourable hearing. You know how much your father and I have our hearts set upon an event so extremely desirable.’

In Lady Ashton’s voice, a tone of impressive, and even stern, innuendo was sedulously and skilfully concealed under an appearance of the most affectionate maternal tenderness. The manner was for Bucklaw, who was easily enough imposed upon; the matter of the exhortation was for the terrified Lucy, who well knew how to interpret her mother’s hints, however skilfully their real purport might be veiled from general observation.

Miss Ashton sat upright in her chair, cast round her a glance in which fear was mingled with a still wilder expression, but remained perfectly silent. Bucklaw, who had in the meantime paced the room to and fro, until he had recovered his composure, now stopped within two or three yards of her chair, and broke

out as follows ; 'I believe I have been a d—d fool, Miss Ashton ; I have tried to speak to you as people tell me young ladies like to be talked to, and I don't think you comprehend what I have been saying ; and no wonder, for d—n me if I understand it myself ! But, however, once for all, and in broad Scotch, your father and mother like what is proposed, and if you can take a plain young fellow for your husband, who will never cross you in anything you have a mind to, I will place you at the head of the best establishment in the three Lothians ; you shall have Lady Girnington's lodging in the Canongate of Edinburgh, go where you please, do what you please, and see what you please — and that's fair. Only I must have a corner at the board-end for a worthless old playfellow of mine, whose company I would rather want than have, if it were not that the d—d fellow has persuaded me that I can't do without him ; and so I hope you won't except against Craigie, although it might be easy to find much better company.'

'Now, out upon you, Bucklaw,' said Lady Ashton, again interposing ; 'how can you think Lucy can have any objection to that blunt, honest, good-natured creature, Captain Craigen-gelt ?'

'Why, madam,' replied Bucklaw, 'as to Craigie's sincerity, honesty, and good-nature, they are, I believe, pretty much upon a par ; but that's neither here nor there — the fellow knows my ways, and has got useful to me, and I cannot well do without him, as I said before. But all this is nothing to the purpose ; for, since I have mustered up courage to make a plain proposal, I would fain hear Miss Ashton, from her own lips, give me a plain answer.'

'My dear Bucklaw,' said Lady Ashton, 'let me spare Lucy's bashfulness. I tell you, in her presence, that she has already consented to be guided by her father and me in this matter. Lucy, my love,' she added, with that singular combination of suavity of tone and pointed energy which we have already noticed — 'Lucy, my dearest love ! speak for yourself, is it not as I say ?'

Her victim answered in a tremulous and hollow voice, 'I have promised to obey you — but upon one condition.'

'She means,' said Lady Ashton, turning to Bucklaw, 'she expects an answer to the demand which she has made upon the man at Vienna, or Ratisbon, or Paris — or where is he ? — for restitution of the engagement in which he had the art to involve her. You will not, I am sure, my dear friend, think it is wrong

that she should feel much delicacy upon this head ; indeed, it concerns us all.'

'Perfectly right — quite fair,' said Bucklaw, half humming, half speaking the end of the old song —

'It is best to be off wi' the old love  
Before you be on wi' the new.'

But I thought,' said he, pausing, 'you might have had an answer six times told from Ravenswood. D—n me, if I have not a mind to go and fetch one myself, if Miss Ashton will honour me with the commission.'

'By no means,' said Lady Ashton ; 'we have had the utmost difficulty of preventing Douglas, for whom it would be more proper, from taking so rash a step ; and do you think we could permit you, my good friend, almost equally dear to us, to go to a desperate man upon an errand so desperate ? In fact, all the friends of the family are of opinion, and my dear Lucy herself ought so to think, that, as this unworthy person has returned no answer to her letter, silence must on this, as in other cases, be held to give consent, and a contract must be supposed to be given up, when the party waives insisting upon it. Sir William, who should know best, is clear upon this subject ; and therefore, my dear Lucy ——'

'Madam,' said Lucy, with unwonted energy, 'urge me no farther ; if this unhappy engagement be restored, I have already said you shall dispose of me as you will ; till then I should commit a heavy sin in the sight of God and man in doing what you require.'

'But, my love, if this man remains obstinately silent ——'

'He will *not* be silent,' answered Lucy ; 'it is six weeks since I sent him a double of my former letter by a sure hand.'

'You have not — you could not — you durst not,' said Lady Ashton, with violence inconsistent with the tone she had intended to assume ; but instantly correcting herself, 'My dearest Lucy,' said she, in her sweetest tone of expostulation, 'how could you think of such a thing ?'

'No matter,' said Bucklaw ; 'I respect Miss Ashton for her sentiments, and I only wish I had been her messenger myself.'

'And pray how long, Miss Ashton,' said her mother, ironically, 'are we to wait the return of your Pacolet — your fairy messenger — since our humble couriers of flesh and blood could not be trusted in this matter ?'

'I have numbered weeks, days, hours, and minutes,' said



Miss Ashton ; 'within another week I shall have an answer, unless he is dead. Till that time, sir,' she said, addressing Bucklaw, 'let me be thus far beholden to you, that you will beg my mother to forbear me upon this subject.'

'I will make it my particular entreaty to Lady Ashton,' said Bucklaw. 'By my honour, madam, I respect your feelings ; and, although the prosecution of this affair be rendered dearer to me than ever, yet, as I am a gentleman, I would renounce it, were it so urged as to give you a moment's pain.'

'Mr. Hayston, I think, cannot apprehend that,' said Lady Ashton, looking pale with anger, 'when the daughter's happiness lies in the bosom of the mother. Let me ask you, Miss Ashton, in what terms your last letter was couched ?'

'Exactly in the same, madam,' answered Lucy, 'which you dictated on a former occasion.'

'When eight days have elapsed, then,' said her mother, resuming her tone of tenderness, 'we shall hope, my dearest love, that you will end this suspense.'

'Miss Ashton must not be hurried, madam,' said Bucklaw, whose bluntness of feeling did not by any means arise from want of good-nature ; 'messengers may be stopped or delayed. I have known a day's journey broke by the casting of a fore-shoe. Stay, let me see my calendar : the twentieth day from this is St. Jude's, and the day before I must be at Caverton Edge, to see the match between the Laird of Kittlegirth's black mare and Johnston the meal-monger's four-year-old colt ; but I can ride all night, or Craigie can bring me word how the match goes ; and I hope, in the meantime, as I shall not myself distress Miss Ashton with any further importunity, that your ladyship yourself, and Sir William, and Colonel Douglas will have the goodness to allow her uninterrupted time for making up her mind.'

'Sir,' said Miss Ashton, 'you are generous.'

'As for that, madam,' answered Bucklaw, 'I only pretend to be a plain, good-humoured young fellow, as I said before, who will willingly make you happy if you will permit him, and show him how to do so.'

Having said this, he saluted her with more emotion than was consistent with his usual train of feeling, and took his leave ; Lady Ashton, as she accompanied him out of the apartment, assuring him that her daughter did full justice to the sincerity of his attachment, and requesting him to see Sir William before his departure, 'since,' as she said, with a keen

glance reverting towards Lucy, 'against St. Jude's day, we must all be ready to *sign and seal*.'

'To sign and seal!' echoed Lucy in a muttering tone, as the door of the apartment closed — 'to sign and seal — to do and die!' and, clasping her extenuated hands together, she sunk back on the easy-chair she occupied, in a state resembling stupor.

From this she was shortly after awakened by the boisterous entry of her brother Henry, who clamorously reminded her of a promise to give him two yards of carnation ribbon to make knots to his new garters. With the most patient composure Lucy arose, and opening a little ivory cabinet, sought out the ribbon the lad wanted, measured it accurately, cut it off into proper lengths, and knotted it into the fashion his boyish whim required.

'Dinna shut the cabinet yet,' said Henry, 'for I must have some of your silver wire to fasten the bells to my hawk's jesses, — and yet the new falcon's not worth them neither; for do you know, after all the plague we had to get her from an eyrie, all the way at Posso, in Mannor Water, she's going to prove, after all, nothing better than a riffer: she just wets her singles in the blood of the partridge, and then breaks away, and lets her fly; and what good can the poor bird do after that, you know, except pine and die in the first heather-cow or whin-bush she can crawl into?'

'Right, Henry — right — very right,' said Lucy, mournfully, holding the boy fast by the hand, after she had given him the wire he wanted; 'but there are more riflers in the world than your falcon, and more wounded birds that seek but to die in quiet, that can find neither brake nor whin-bush to hide their heads in.'

'Ah! that's some speech out of your romances,' said the boy; 'and Sholto says they have turned your head. But I hear Norman whistling to the hawk; I must go fasten on the jesses.'

And he scampered away with the thoughtless gaiety of boyhood, leaving his sister to the bitterness of her own reflections.

'It is decreed,' she said, 'that every living creature, even those who owe me most kindness, are to shun me, and leave me to those by whom I am beset. It is just it should be thus. Alone and uncounselled, I involved myself in these perils; alone and uncounselled, I must extricate myself or die.'

## CHAPTER XXX

What doth ensue  
But moody and dull melancholy,  
Kinsman to grim and comfortless despair,  
And, at her heels, a huge infectious troop  
Of pale distemperatures, and foes to life?

*Comedy of Errors.*

AS some vindication of the ease with which Bucklaw (who otherwise, as he termed himself, was really a very good-humoured fellow) resigned his judgment to the management of Lady Ashton, while paying his addresses to her daughter, the reader must call to mind the strict domestic discipline which, at this period, was exercised over the females of a Scottish family.

The manners of the country in this, as in many other respects, coincided with those of France before the Revolution. Young women of the higher ranks seldom mingled in society until after marriage, and, both in law and fact, were held to be under the strict tutelage of their parents, who were too apt to enforce the views for their settlement in life without paying any regard to the inclination of the parties chiefly interested. On such occasions, the suitor expected little more from his bride than a silent acquiescence in the will of her parents; and as few opportunities of acquaintance, far less of intimacy, occurred, he made his choice by the outside, as the lovers in the *Merchant of Venice* select the casket, contented to trust to chance the issue of the lottery in which he had hazarded a venture.

It was not therefore surprising, such being the general manners of the age, that Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw, whom dissipated habits had detached in some degree from the best society, should not attend particularly to those feelings in his elected bride to which many men of more sentiment, experience, and reflection would, in all probability, have been equally indifferent. He knew what all accounted the principal point,

that her parents and friends, namely, were decidedly in his favour, and there existed most powerful reasons for their predilection.

In truth, the conduct of the Marquis of A——, since Ravenswood's departure, had been such as almost to bar the possibility of his kinsman's union with Lucy Ashton. The Marquis was Ravenswood's sincere but misjudging friend; or rather, like many friends and patrons, he consulted what he considered to be his relation's true interest, although he knew that in doing so he run counter to his inclinations.

The Marquis drove on, therefore, with the plenitude of ministerial authority, an appeal to the British House of Peers against those judgments of the courts of law by which Sir William became possessed of Ravenswood's hereditary property. As this measure, enforced with all the authority of power, was new in Scottish judicial proceedings, though now so frequently resorted to, it was exclaimed against by the lawyers on the opposite side of politics, as an interference with the civil judicature of the country, equally new, arbitrary, and tyrannical. And if it thus affected even strangers connected with them only by political party, it may be guessed what the Ashton family themselves said and thought under so gross a dispensation. Sir William, still more worldly-minded than he was timid, was reduced to despair by the loss by which he was threatened. His son's haughtier spirit was exalted into rage at the idea of being deprived of his expected patrimony. But to Lady Ashton's yet more vindictive temper the conduct of Ravenswood, or rather of his patron, appeared to be an offence challenging the deepest and most mortal revenge. Even the quiet and confiding temper of Lucy herself, swayed by the opinions expressed by all around her, could not but consider the conduct of Ravenswood as precipitate, and even unkind. 'It was my father,' she repeated with a sigh, 'who welcomed him to this place, and encouraged, or at least allowed, the intimacy between us. Should he not have remembered this, and requited it with at least some moderate degree of procrastination in the assertion of his own alleged rights? I would have forfeited for him double the value of these lands, which he pursues with an ardour that shows he has forgotten how much I am implicated in the matter.'

Lucy, however, could only murmur these things to herself, unwilling to increase the prejudices against her lover entertained by all around her, who exclaimed against the steps

pursued on his account as illegal, vexatious, and tyrannical, resembling the worst measures in the worst times of the worst Stuarts, and a degradation of Scotland, the decisions of whose learned judges were thus subjected to the review of a court composed indeed of men of the highest rank, but who were not trained to the study of any municipal law, and might be supposed specially to hold in contempt that of Scotland. As a natural consequence of the alleged injustice meditated towards her father, every means was resorted to, and every argument urged, to induce Miss Ashton to break off her engagement with Ravenswood, as being scandalous, shameful, and sinful, formed with the mortal enemy of her family, and calculated to add bitterness to the distress of her parents.

Lucy's spirit, however, was high, and, although unaided and alone, she could have borne much : she could have endured the repinings of her father ; his murmurs against what he called the tyrannical usage of the ruling party ; his ceaseless charges of ingratitude against Ravenswood ; his endless lectures on the various means by which contracts may be voided and annulled ; his quotations from the civil, the municipal, and the canon law ; and his prelections upon the *patria potestas*.

She might have borne also in patience, or repelled with scorn, the bitter taunts and occasional violence of her brother, Colonel Douglas Ashton, and the impertinent and intrusive interference of other friends and relations. But it was beyond her power effectually to withstand or elude the constant and unceasing persecution of Lady Ashton, who, laying every other wish aside, had bent the whole efforts of her powerful mind to break her daughter's contract with Ravenswood, and to place a perpetual bar between the lovers, by effecting Lucy's union with Bucklaw. Far more deeply skilled than her husband in the recesses of the human heart, she was aware that in this way she might strike a blow of deep and decisive vengeance upon one whom she esteemed as her mortal enemy ; nor did she hesitate at raising her arm, although she knew that the wound must be dealt through the bosom of her daughter. With this stern and fixed purpose, she sounded every deep and shallow of her daughter's soul, assumed alternately every disguise of manner which could serve her object, and prepared at leisure every species of dire machinery by which the human mind can be wrenched from its settled determination. Some of these were of an obvious description, and require only to be cursorily mentioned ; others were characteristic of



the time, the country, and the persons engaged in this singular drama.

It was of the last consequence that all intercourse betwixt the lovers should be stopped, and, by dint of gold and authority, Lady Ashton contrived to possess herself of such a complete command of all who were placed around her daughter, that, in fact, no leaguered fortress was ever more completely blockaded ; while, at the same time, to all outward appearance Miss Ashton lay under no restriction. 'The verge of her parents' domains became, in respect to her, like the viewless and enchanted line drawn around a fairy castle, where nothing unpermitted can either enter from without or escape from within. Thus every letter, in which Ravenswood conveyed to Lucy Ashton the indispensable reasons which detained him abroad, and more than one note which poor Lucy had addressed to him through what she thought a secure channel, fell into the hands of her mother. It could not be but that the tenor of these intercepted letters, especially those of Ravenswood, should contain something to irritate the passions and fortify the obstinacy of her into whose hands they fell ; but Lady Ashton's passions were too deep-rooted to require this fresh food. She burnt the papers as regularly as she perused them ; and as they consumed into vapour and tinder, regarded them with a smile upon her compressed lips, and an exultation in her steady eye, which showed her confidence that the hopes of the writers should soon be rendered equally unsubstantial.

It usually happens that fortune aids the machinations of those who are prompt to avail themselves of every chance that offers.. A report was wafted from the continent, founded, like others of the same sort, upon many plausible circumstances, but without any real basis, stating the Master of Ravenswood to be on the eve of marriage with a foreign lady of fortune and distinction. This was greedily caught up by both the political parties, who were at once struggling for power and for popular favour, and who seized, as usual, upon the most private circumstances in the lives of each other's partizans to convert them into subjects of political discussion.

The Marquis of A—— gave his opinion aloud and publicly, not indeed in the coarse terms ascribed to him by Captain Craigengelt, but in a manner sufficiently offensive to the Ashtons. 'He thought the report,' he said, 'highly probable, and heartily wished it might be true. Such a match was fitter and far more creditable for a spirited young fellow than a

marriage with the daughter of an old Whig lawyer, whose chicanery had so nearly ruined his father.'

The other party, of course, laying out of view the opposition which the Master of Ravenswood received from Miss Ashton's family, cried shame upon his fickleness and perfidy, as if he had seduced the young lady into an engagement, and wilfully and causelessly abandoned her for another.

Sufficient care was taken that this report should find its way to Ravenswood Castle through every various channel, Lady Ashton being well aware that the very reiteration of the same rumour, from so many quarters, could not but give it a semblance of truth. By some it was told as a piece of ordinary news, by some communicated as serious intelligence; now it was whispered to Lucy Ashton's ear in the tone of malignant pleasantry, and now transmitted to her as a matter of grave and serious warning.

Even the boy Henry was made the instrument of adding to his sister's torments. One morning he rushed into the room with a willow branch in his hand, which he told her had arrived that instant from Germany for her special wearing. Lucy, as we have seen, was remarkably fond of her younger brother, and at that moment his wanton and thoughtless unkindness seemed more keenly injurious than even the studied insults of her elder brother. Her grief, however, had no shade of resentment; she folded her arms about the boy's neck, and saying faintly, 'Poor Henry! you speak but what they tell you,' she burst into a flood of unrestrained tears. The boy was moved, notwithstanding the thoughtlessness of his age and character. 'The devil take me,' said he, 'Lucy, if I fetch you any more of these tormenting messages again; for I like you better,' said he, kissing away the tears, 'than the whole pack of them; and you shall have my grey pony to ride on, and you shall canter him if you like, -- ay, and ride beyond the village, too, if you have a mind.'

'Who told you,' said Lucy, 'that I am not permitted to ride where I please?'

'That's a secret,' said the boy; 'but you will find you can never ride beyond the village but your horse will cast a shoe, or fall lame, or the castle bell will ring, or something will happen to bring you back. But if I tell you more of these things, Douglas will not get me the pair of colours they have promised me, and so good-morrow to you.'

This dialogue plunged Lucy in still deeper dejection, as it tended to show her plainly what she had for some time suspected, that she was little better than a prisoner at large in her

father's house. We have described her in the outset of our story as of a romantic disposition, delighting in tales of love and wonder, and readily identifying herself with the situation of those legendary heroines with whose adventures, for want of better reading, her memory had become stocked. The fairy wand, with which in her solitude she had delighted to raise visions of enchantment, became now the rod of a magician, the bond slave of evil genii, serving only to invoke spectres at which the exorcist trembled. She felt herself the object of suspicion, of scorn, of dislike at least, if not of hatred, to her own family; and it seemed to her that she was abandoned by the very person on whose account she was exposed to the enmity of all around her. Indeed, the evidence of Ravenswood's infidelity began to assume every day a more determined character.

A soldier of fortune, of the name of Westenho, an old familiar of Craigenfelt's, chanced to arrive from abroad about this time. The worthy Captain, though without any precise communication with Lady Ashton, always acted most regularly and sedulously in support of her plans, and easily prevailed upon his friend, by dint of exaggeration of real circumstances and coining of others, to give explicit testimony to the truth of Ravenswood's approaching marriage.

Thus beset on all hands, and in a manner reduced to despair, Lucy's temper gave way under the pressure of constant affliction and persecution. She became gloomy and abstracted, and, contrary to her natural and ordinary habit of mind, sometimes turned with spirit, and even fierceness, on those by whom she was long and closely annoyed. Her health also began to be shaken, and her hectic cheek and wandering eye gave symptoms of what is called a fever upon the spirits. In most mothers this would have moved compassion; but Lady Ashton, compact and firm of purpose, saw these waverings of health and intellect with no greater sympathy than that with which the hostile engineer regards the towers of a beleaguered city as they reel under the discharge of his artillery; or rather, she considered these starts and inequalities of temper as symptoms of Lucy's expiring resolution; as the angler, by the throes and convulsive exertions of the fish which he has hooked, becomes aware that he soon will be able to land him. To accelerate the catastrophe in the present case, Lady Ashton had recourse to an expedient very consistent with the temper and credulity of those times, but which the reader will probably pronounce truly detestable and diabolical.

## CHAPTER XXXI

In which a witch did dwell, in loathly weeds,  
And wilful want, all careless of her needs ;  
So choosing solitary to abide,  
Far from all neighbours, that her devilish deeds  
And hellish arts from people she might hide,  
And hurt far off, unknown, whome'er she envied.

*Faërie Queene.*

THE health of Lucy Ashton soon required the assistance of a person more skilful in the office of a sick-nurse than the female domestics of the family. Ailsie Gourlay, sometimes called the Wise Woman of Bowden, was the person whom, for her own strong reasons, Lady Ashton selected as an attendant upon her daughter.

This woman had acquired a considerable reputation among the ignorant by the pretended cures which she performed, especially in 'oncomes,' as the Scotch call them, or mysterious diseases, which baffle the regular physician. Her pharmacopœia consisted partly of herbs selected in planetary hours, partly of words, signs, and charms, which sometimes, perhaps, produced a favourable influence upon the imagination of her patients. Such was the avowed profession of Luckie Gourlay, which, as may well be supposed, was looked upon with a suspicious eye, not only by her neighbours, but even by the clergy of the district. In private, however, she traded more deeply in the occult sciences ; for, notwithstanding the dreadful punishments inflicted upon the supposed crime of witchcraft, there wanted not those who, steeled by want and bitterness of spirit, were willing to adopt the hateful and dangerous character, for the sake of the influence which its terrors enabled them to exercise in the vicinity, and the wretched emolument which they could extract by the practice of their supposed art.

Ailsie Gourlay was not indeed fool enough to acknowledge a compact with the Evil One, which would have been a swift and

ready road to the stake and tar-barrel. Her fairy, she said, like Caliban's was a harmless fairy. Nevertheless, she 'spaed fortunes,' read dreams, composed philtres, discovered stolen goods, and made and dissolved matches as successfully as if, according to the belief of the whole neighbourhood, she had been aided in those arts by Beelzebub himself. The worst of the pretenders to these sciences was, that they were generally persons who, feeling themselves odious to humanity, were careless of what they did to deserve the public hatred. Real crimes were often committed under pretence of magical imposture; and it somewhat relieves the disgust with which we read, in the criminal records, the conviction of these wretches, to be aware that many of them merited, as poisoners, suborners, and diabolical agents in secret domestic crimes, the severe fate to which they were condemned for the imaginary guilt of witchcraft.

Such was Ailsie Gourlay, whom, in order to attain the absolute subjugation of Lucy Ashton's mind, her mother thought it fitting to place near her person. A woman of less consequence than Lady Ashton had not dared to take such a step; but her high rank and strength of character set her above the censure of the world, and she was allowed to have selected for her daughter's attendant the best and most experienced sick-nurse and 'mediciner' in the neighbourhood, where an inferior person would have fallen under the reproach of calling in the assistance of a partner and ally of the great Enemy of mankind.

The beldam caught her cue readily and by innuendo, without giving Lady Ashton the pain of distinct explanation. She was in many respects qualified for the part she played, which indeed could not be efficiently assumed without some knowledge of the human heart and passions. Dame Gourlay perceived that Lucy shuddered at her external appearance, which we have already described when we found her in the death-chamber of blind Alice; and while internally she hated the poor girl for the involuntary horror with which she saw she was regarded, she commenced her operations by endeavouring to efface or overcome those prejudices which, in her heart, she resented as mortal offences. This was easily done, for the hag's external ugliness was soon balanced by a show of kindness and interest, to which Lucy had of late been little accustomed; her attentive services and real skill gained her the ear, if not the confidence, of her patient; and under pretence of diverting



the solitude of a sick-room, she soon led her attention captive by the legends in which she was well skilled, and to which Lucy's habits of reading and reflection induced her to 'lend an attentive ear.' Dame Gourlay's tales were at first of a mild and interesting character—

Of fays that nightly dance upon the wold,  
And lovers doom'd to wander and to weep,  
And castles high, where wicked wizards keep  
Their captive thralls.

Gradually, however, they assumed a darker and more mysterious character, and became such as, told by the midnight lamp, and enforced by the tremulous tone, the quivering and livid lip, the uplifted skinny forefinger, and the shaking head of the blue-eyed hag, might have appalled a less credulous imagination in an age more hard of belief. The old Sycorax saw her advantage, and gradually narrowed her magic circle around the devoted victim on whose spirit she practised. Her legends began to relate to the fortunes of the Ravenswood family, whose ancient grandeur and portentous authority credulity had graced with so many superstitious attributes. The story of the fatal fountain was narrated at full length, and with formidable additions, by the ancient sibyl. The prophecy, quoted by Caleb, concerning the dead bride who was to be won by the last of the Ravenswoods, had its own mysterious commentary; and the singular circumstance of the apparition seen by the Master of Ravenswood in the forest, having partly transpired through his hasty inquiries in the cottage of Old Alice, formed a theme for many exaggerations.

Lucy might have despised these tales if they had been related concerning another family, or if her own situation had been less despondent. But circumstanced as she was, the idea that an evil fate hung over her attachment became predominant over her other feelings; and the gloom of superstition darkened a mind already sufficiently weakened by sorrow, distress, uncertainty, and an oppressive sense of desertion and desolation. Stories were told by her attendant so closely resembling her own in their circumstances, that she was gradually led to converse upon such tragic and mystical subjects with the beldam, and to repose a sort of confidence in the sibyl, whom she still regarded with involuntary shuddering. Dame Gourlay knew how to avail herself of this imperfect confidence. She directed Lucy's thoughts to the means of

inquiring into futurity — the surest mode, perhaps, of shaking the understanding and destroying the spirits. Omens were expounded, dreams were interpreted, and other tricks of jugglery perhaps resorted to, by which the pretended adepts of the period deceived and fascinated their deluded followers. I find it mentioned in the articles of dittay against Ailsie Gourlay — for it is some comfort to know that the old hag was tried, condemned, and burned on the top of North Berwick Law, by sentence of a commission from the privy council — I find, I say, it was charged against her, among other offences, that she had, by the aid and delusions of Satan, shown to a young person of quality in a mirror glass, a gentleman then abroad, to whom the said young person was betrothed, and who appeared in the vision to be in the act of bestowing his hand upon another lady. But this and some other parts of the record appear to have been studiously left imperfect in names and dates, probably out of regard to the honour of the families concerned. If Dame Gourlay was able actually to play off such a piece of jugglery, it is clear she must have had better assistance to practise the deception than her own skill or funds could supply. Meanwhile, this mysterious visionary traffic had its usual effect in unsettling Miss Ashton's mind. Her temper became unequal, her health decayed daily, her manners grew moping, melancholy, and uncertain. Her father, guessing partly at the cause of these appearances, and exerting a degree of authority unusual with him, made a point of banishing Dame Gourlay from the castle; but the arrow was shot, and was rankling barb-deep in the side of the wounded deer.

It was shortly after the departure of this woman, that Lucy Ashton, urged by her parents, announced to them, with a vivacity by which they were startled, 'That she was conscious heaven and earth and hell had set themselves against her union with Ravenswood; still her contract,' she said, 'was a binding contract, and she neither would nor could resign it without the consent of Ravenswood. Let me be assured,' she concluded, 'that he will free me from my engagement, and dispose of me as you please, I care not how. When the diamonds are gone, what signifies the casket?'

The tone of obstinacy with which this was said, her eyes flashing with unnatural light, and her hands firmly clenched, precluded the possibility of dispute; and the utmost length which Lady Ashton's art could attain, only got her the privilege

of dictating the letter, by which her daughter required to know of Ravenswood whether he intended to abide by or to surrender what she termed 'their unfortunate engagement.' Of this advantage Lady Ashton so far and so ingeniously availed herself that, according to the wording of the letter, the reader would have supposed Lucy was calling upon her lover to renounce a contract which was contrary to the interests and inclinations of both. Not trusting even to this point of deception, Lady Ashton finally determined to suppress the letter altogether, in hopes that Lucy's impatience would induce her to condemn Ravenswood unheard and in absence. In this she was disappointed. The time, indeed, had long elapsed when an answer should have been received from the continent. The faint ray of hope which still glimmered in Lucy's mind was wellnigh extinguished. But the idea never forsook her that her letter might not have been duly forwarded. One of her mother's new machinations unexpectedly furnished her with the means of ascertaining what she most desired to know.

The female agent of hell having been dismissed from the castle, Lady Ashton, who wrought by all variety of means, resolved to employ, for working the same end on Lucy's mind, an agent of a very different character. This was no other than the Reverend Mr. Bide-the-Bent, a Presbyterian clergyman, formerly mentioned, of the very strictest order and the most rigid orthodoxy, whose aid she called in, upon the principle of the tyrant in the tragedy :

I'll have a priest shall preach her from her faith,  
And make it sin not to renounce that vow  
Which I'd have broken.

But Lady Ashton was mistaken in the agent she had selected. His prejudices, indeed, were easily enlisted on her side, and it was no difficult matter to make him regard with horror the prospect of a union betwixt the daughter of a God-fearing, professing, and Presbyterian family of distinction with the heir of a blood-thirsty prelatist and persecutor, the hands of whose fathers had been dyed to the wrists in the blood of God's saints. This resembled, in the divine's opinion, the union of a Moabitish stranger with a daughter of Zion. But with all the more severe prejudices and principles of his sect, Bide-the-Bent possessed a sound judgment, and had learnt sympathy even in that very school of persecution where the

heart is so frequently hardened. In a private interview with Miss Ashton, he was deeply moved by her distress, and could not but admit the justice of her request to be permitted a direct communication with Ravenswood upon the subject of their solemn contract. When she urged to him the great uncertainty under which she laboured whether her letter had been ever forwarded, the old man paced the room with long steps, shook his grey head, rested repeatedly for a space on his ivory-headed staff, and, after much hesitation, confessed that he thought her doubts so reasonable that he would himself aid in the removal of them.

‘I cannot but opine, Miss Lucy,’ he said, ‘that your worshipful lady mother hath in this matter an eagerness whilk, although it ariseth doubtless from love to your best interests here and hereafter, for the man is of persecuting blood, and himself a persecutor, a Cavalier or Malignant, and a scoffer, who hath no inheritance in Jesse; nevertheless, we are commanded to do justice unto all, and to fulfil our bond and covenant, as well to the stranger as to him who is in brotherhood with us. Wherefore myself, even I myself, will be aiding unto the delivery of your letter to the man Edgar Ravenswood, trusting that the issue thereof may be your deliverance from the nets in which he hath sinfully engaged you. And that I may do in this neither more nor less than hath been warranted by your honourable parents, I pray you to transcribe, without increment or subtraction, the letter formerly expeded under the dictation of your right honourable mother; and I shall put it into such sure course of being delivered, that if, honoured young madam, you shall receive no answer, it will be necessary that you conclude that the man meaneth in silence to abandon that naughty contract, which, peradventure, he may be unwilling directly to restore.’

Lucy eagerly embraced the expedient of the worthy divine. A new letter was written in the precise terms of the former, and consigned by Mr. Bide-the-Bent to the charge of Saunders Moonshine, a zealous elder of the church when on shore, and when on board his brig as bold a smuggler as ever ran out a sliding bowsprit to the winds that blow betwixt Campvere and the east coast of Scotland. At the recommendation of his pastor, Saunders readily undertook that the letter should be securely conveyed to the Master of Ravenswood at the court where he new resided.

This retrospect became necessary to explain the conference

betwixt Miss Ashton, her mother, and Bucklaw which we have detailed in a preceding chapter.

Lucy was now like the sailor who, while drifting through a tempestuous ocean, clings for safety to a single plank, his powers of grasping it becoming every moment more feeble, and the deep darkness of the night only checkered by the flashes of lightning hissing as they show the white tops of the billows, in which he is soon to be engulfed.

Week crept away after week, and day after day. St. Jude's day arrived, the last and protracted term to which Lucy had limited herself, and there was neither letter nor news of Ravenswood.



## CHAPTER XXXII

How fair these names, how much unlike they look  
To all the blurr'd subscriptions in my book !  
The bridegroom's letters stand in row above,  
Tapering, yet straight, like pine-trees in his grove ;  
While free and fine the bride's appear below,  
As light and slender as her jessamines grow.

CRABBE.

**S**T. JUDE'S day came, the term assigned by Lucy herself as the furthest date of expectation, and, as we have already said, there were neither letters from nor news of Ravenswood. But there were news of Bucklaw, and of his trusty associate Craigengelt, who arrived early in the morning for the completion of the proposed espousals, and for signing the necessary deeds.

These had been carefully prepared under the revisal of Sir William Ashton himself, it having been resolved, on account of the state of Miss Ashton's health, as it was said, that none save the parties immediately interested should be present when the parchments were subscribed. It was further determined that the marriage should be solemnised upon the fourth day after signing the articles, a measure adopted by Lady Ashton, in order that Lucy might have as little time as possible to recede or relapse into intractability. There was no appearance, however, of her doing either. She heard the proposed arrangement with the calm indifference of despair, or rather with an apathy arising from the oppressed and stupified state of her feelings. To an eye so unobserving as that of Bucklaw, her demeanour had little more of reluctance than might suit the character of a bashful young lady, who, however, he could not disguise from himself, was complying with the choice of her friends rather than exercising any personal predilection in his favour.

When the morning compliments of the bridegroom had been paid, Miss Ashton was left for some time to herself ; her mother

remarking, that the deeds must be signed before the hour of noon, in order that the marriage might be happy.

Lucy suffered herself to be attired for the occasion as the taste of her attendants suggested, and was of course splendidly arrayed. Her dress was composed of white satin and Brussels lace, and her hair arranged with a profusion of jewels, whose lustre made a strange contrast to the deadly paleness of her complexion, and to the trouble which dwelt in her unsettled eye.

Her toilette was hardly finished ere Henry appeared, to conduct the passive bride to the state apartment, where all was prepared for signing the contract. 'Do you know, sister,' he said, 'I am glad you are to have Bucklaw after all, instead of Ravenswood, who looked like a Spanish grandee come to cut our throats and trample our bodies under foot. And I am glad the broad seas are between us this day, for I shall never forget how frightened I was when I took him for the picture of old Sir Malise walked out of the canvas. Tell me true, are you not glad to be fairly shot of him?'

'Ask me no questions, dear Henry,' said his unfortunate sister; 'there is little more can happen to make me either glad or sorry in this world.'

'And that's what all young brides say,' said Henry; 'and so do not be cast down, Lucy, for you'll tell another tale a twelvemonth hence; and I am to be bride's-man, and ride before you to the kirk; and all our kith, kin, and allies, and all Bucklaw's, are to be mounted and in order; and I am to have a scarlet laced coat, and a feathered hat, and a sword-belt, double bordered with gold, and *point d'Espagne*, and a dagger instead of a sword; and I should like a sword much better, but my father won't hear of it. All my things, and a hundred besides, are to come out from Edinburgh to-night with old Gilbert and the sumpter mules; and I will bring them and show them to you the instant they come.'

The boy's chatter was here interrupted by the arrival of Lady Ashton, somewhat alarmed at her daughter's stay. With one of her sweetest smiles, she took Lucy's arm under her own, and led her to the apartment where her presence was expected.

There were only present, Sir William Ashton and Colonel Douglas Ashton, the last in full regimentals; Bucklaw, in bridegroom trim; Craigengelt, freshly equipt from top to toe by the bounty of his patron, and bedizened with as much lace as might have become the dress of the Copper Captain; together

with the Rev. Mr. Bide-the-Bent; the presence of a minister being, in strict Presbyterian families, an indispensable requisite upon all occasions of unusual solemnity.

Wines and refreshments were placed on a table, on which the writings were displayed, ready for signature.

But before proceeding either to business or refreshment, Mr. Bide-the-Bent, at a signal from Sir William Ashton, invited the company to join him in a short extemporaneous prayer, in which he implored a blessing upon the contract now to be solemnised between the honourable parties then present. With the simplicity of his times and profession, which permitted strong personal allusions, he petitioned that the wounded mind of one of these noble parties might be healed, in reward of her compliance with the advice of her right honourable parents; and that, as she had proved herself a child after God's commandment, by honouring her father and mother, she and hers might enjoy the promised blessing — length of days in the land here, and a happy portion hereafter in a better country. He prayed farther, that the bridegroom might be weaned from those follies which seduce youth from the path of knowledge; that he might cease to take delight in vain and unprofitable company, scoffers, rioters, and those who sit late at the wine (here Bucklaw winked to Craigengelt), and cease from the society that causeth to err. A suitable supplication in behalf of Sir William and Lady Ashton and their family concluded this religious address, which thus embraced every individual present excepting Craigengelt, whom the worthy divine probably considered as past all hopes of grace.

The business of the day now went forward: Sir William Ashton signed the contract with legal solemnity and precision; his son, with military nonchalance; and Bucklaw, having subscribed as rapidly as Craigengelt could manage to turn the leaves, concluded by wiping his pen on that worthy's new laced cravat.

It was now Miss Ashton's turn to sign the writings, and she was guided by her watchful mother to the table for that purpose. At her first attempt, she began to write with a dry pen, and when the circumstance was pointed out, seemed unable, after several attempts, to dip it in the massive silver ink-standish, which stood full before her. Lady Ashton's vigilance hastened to supply the deficiency. I have myself seen the fatal deed, and in the distinct characters in which the name of Lucy Ashton is traced on each page there is only a very slight tremulous irregularity, indicative of her state of mind at the time of the

subscription. But the last signature is incomplete, defaced, and blotted; for, while her hand was employed in tracing it, the hasty tramp of a horse was heard at the gate, succeeded by a step in the outer gallery, and a voice which, in a commanding tone, bore down the opposition of the menials. The pen dropped from Lucy's fingers, as she exclaimed with a faint shriek — 'He is come — he is come!'

## CHAPTER XXXIII

This by his tongue should be a Montague !  
Fetch me my rapier, boy ;  
Now, by the faith and honour of my kin,  
To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

*Romeo and Juliet.*

**H**ARDLY had Miss Ashton dropped the pen, when the door of the apartment flew open, and the Master of Ravenswood entered the apartment.

Lockhard and another domestic, who had in vain attempted to oppose his passage through the gallery or antechamber, were seen standing on the threshold transfixed with surprise, which was instantly communicated to the whole party in the state-room. That of Colonel Douglas Ashton was mingled with resentment ; that of Bucklaw with haughty and affected indifference ; the rest, even Lady Ashton herself, showed signs of fear ; and Lucy seemed stiffened to stone by this unexpected apparition. Apparition it might well be termed, for Ravenswood had more the appearance of one returned from the dead than of a living visitor.

He planted himself full in the middle of the apartment, opposite to the table at which Lucy was seated, on whom, as if she had been alone in the chamber, he bent his eyes with a mingled expression of deep grief and deliberate indignation. His dark-coloured riding cloak, displaced from one shoulder, hung around one side of his person in the ample folds of the Spanish mantle. The rest of his rich dress was travel-soiled, and deranged by hard riding. He had a sword by his side, and pistols in his belt. His slouched hat, which he had not removed at entrance, gave an additional gloom to his dark features, which, wasted by sorrow and marked by the ghastly look communicated by long illness, added to a countenance naturally somewhat stern and wild a fierce and even savage expression. The matted and dishevelled locks of hair which escaped from



under his hat, together with his fixed and unmoved posture, made his head more resemble that of a marble bust than that of a living man. He said not a single word, and there was a deep silence in the company for more than two minutes.

It was broken by Lady Ashton, who in that space partly recovered her natural audacity. She demanded to know the cause of this unauthorised intrusion.

‘That is a question, madam,’ said her son, ‘which I have the best right to ask; and I must request of the Master of Ravenswood to follow me where he can answer it at leisure.’

Bucklaw interposed, saying, ‘No man on earth should usurp his previous right in demanding an explanation from the Master. Craigengelt,’ he added, in an undertone, ‘d—n ye, why do you stand staring as if you saw a ghost? fetch me my sword from the gallery.’

‘I will relinquish to none,’ said Colonel Ashton, ‘my right of calling to account the man who has offered this unparalleled affront to my family.’

‘Be patient, gentlemen,’ said Ravenswood, turning sternly towards them, and waving his hand as if to impose silence on their altercation. ‘If you are as weary of your lives as I am, I will find time and place to pledge mine against one or both; at present, I have no leisure for the disputes of triflers.’

‘Triflers!’ echoed Colonel Ashton, half unsheathing his sword, while Bucklaw laid his hand on the hilt of that which Craigengelt had just reached him.

Sir William Ashton, alarmed for his son’s safety, rushed between the young men and Ravenswood, exclaiming, ‘My son, I command you — Bucklaw, I entreat you — keep the peace, in the name of the Queen and of the law!’

‘In the name of the law of God,’ said Bide-the-Bent, advancing also with uplifted hands between Bucklaw, the Colonel, and the object of their resentment — ‘in the name of Him who brought peace on earth and good-will to mankind, I implore — I beseech — I command you to forbear violence towards each other! God hateth the bloodthirsty man; he who striketh with the sword shall perish with the sword.’

‘Do you take me for a dog, sir,’ said Colonel Ashton, turning fiercely upon him, ‘or something more brutally stupid, to endure this insult in my father’s house? Let me go, Bucklaw! He shall account to me, or, by Heaven, I will stab him where he stands!’

‘You shall not touch him here,’ said Bucklaw; ‘he once

gave me my life, and were he the devil come to fly away with the whole house and generation, he shall have nothing but fair play.'

The passions of the two young men thus counteracting each other gave Ravenswood leisure to exclaim, in a stern and steady voice, 'Silence! — let him who really seeks danger take the fitting time when it is to be found; my mission here will be shortly accomplished. Is *that* your handwriting, madam?' he added in a softer tone, extending towards Miss Ashton her last letter.

A faltering 'Yes' seemed rather to escape from her lips than to be uttered as a voluntary answer.

'And is *this* also your handwriting?' extending towards her the mutual engagement.

Lucy remained silent. Terror, and a yet stronger and more confused feeling, so utterly disturbed her understanding that she probably scarcely comprehended the question that was put to her.

'If you design,' said Sir William Ashton, 'to found any legal claim on that paper, sir, do not expect to receive any answer to an extrajudicial question.'

'Sir William Ashton,' said Ravenswood, 'I pray you, and all who hear me, that you will not mistake my purpose. If this young lady, of her own free will, desires the restoration of this contract, as her letter would seem to imply, there is not a withered leaf which this autumn wind strews on the heath that is more valueless in my eyes. But I must and will hear the truth from her own mouth; without this satisfaction I will not leave this spot. Murder me by numbers you possibly may; but I am an armed man — I am a desperate man, and I will not die without ample vengeance. This is my resolution, take it as you may. I WILL hear her determination from her own mouth; from her own mouth, alone, and without witnesses, will I hear it. Now, choose,' he said, drawing his sword with the right hand, and, with the left, by the same motion taking a pistol from his belt and cocking it, but turning the point of one weapon and the muzzle of the other to the ground — 'choose if you will have this hall floated with blood, or if you will grant me the decisive interview with my affianced bride which the laws of God and the country alike entitle me to demand.'

All recoiled at the sound of his voice and the determined action by which it was accompanied; for the ecstasy of real desperation seldom fails to overpower the less energetic passions

by which it may be opposed. The clergyman was the first to speak. 'In the name of God,' he said, 'receive an overture of peace from the meanest of His servants. What this honourable person demands, albeit it is urged with over violence, hath yet in it something of reason. Let him hear from Miss Lucy's own lips that she hath dutifully acceded to the will of her parents, and repenteth her of her covenant with him; and when he is assured of this he will depart in peace unto his own dwelling, and cumber us no more. Alas! the workings of the ancient Adam are strong even in the regenerate; surely we should have long-suffering with those who, being yet in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, are swept forward by the uncontrollable current of worldly passion. Let, then, the Master of Ravenswood have the interview on which he insisteth; it can but be as a passing pang to this honourable maiden, since her faith is now irrevocably pledged to the choice of her parents. Let it, I say, be thus: it belongeth to my functions to entreat your honours' compliance with this healing overture.'

'Never!' answered Lady Ashton, whose rage had now overcome her first surprise and terror — 'never shall this man speak in private with my daughter, the affianced bride of another! Pass from this room who will, I remain here. I fear neither his violence nor his weapons, though some,' she said, glancing a look towards Colonel Ashton, 'who bear my name appear more moved by them.'

'For God's sake, madam,' answered the worthy divine, 'add not fuel to firebrands. The Master of Ravenswood cannot, I am sure, object to your presence, the young lady's state of health being considered, and your maternal duty. I myself will also tarry; peradventure my grey hairs may turn away wrath.'

'You are welcome to do so, sir,' said Ravenswood; 'and Lady Ashton is also welcome to remain, if she shall think proper; but let all others depart.'

'Ravenswood,' said Colonel Ashton, crossing him as he went out, 'you shall account for this ere long.'

'When you please,' replied Ravenswood.

'But I,' said Bucklaw, with a half smile, 'have a prior demand on your leisure, a claim of some standing.'

'Arrange it as you will,' said Ravenswood; 'leave me but this day in peace, and I will have no dearer employment on earth to-morrow than to give you all the satisfaction you can desire.'

The other gentlemen left the apartment; but Sir William Ashton lingered.

‘Master of Ravenswood,’ he said, in a conciliating tone, ‘I think I have not deserved that you should make this scandal and outrage in my family. If you will sheathe your sword, and retire with me into my study, I will prove to you, by the most satisfactory arguments, the inutility of your present irregular procedure ——’

‘To-morrow, sir — to-morrow — to-morrow, I will hear you at length,’ reiterated Ravenswood, interrupting him; ‘this day hath its own sacred and indispensable business.’

He pointed to the door, and Sir William left the apartment.

Ravenswood sheathed his sword, uncocked and returned his pistol to his belt; walked deliberately to the door of the apartment, which he bolted; returned, raised his hat from his forehead, and, gazing upon Lucy with eyes in which an expression of sorrow overcame their late fierceness, spread his dishevelled locks back from his face, and said, ‘Do you know me, Miss Ashton? I am still Edgar Ravenswood.’ She was silent, and he went on with increasing vehemence — ‘I am still that Edgar Ravenswood who, for your affection, renounced the dear ties by which injured honour bound him to seek vengeance. I am that Ravenswood who, for your sake, forgave, nay, clasped hands in friendship with, the oppressor and pillager of his house, the traducer and murderer of his father.’

‘My daughter,’ answered Lady Ashton, interrupting him, ‘has no occasion to dispute the identity of your person; the venom of your present language is sufficient to remind her that she speaks with the mortal enemy of her father.’

‘I pray you to be patient, madam,’ answered Ravenswood; ‘my answer must come from her own lips. Once more, Miss Lucy Ashton, I am that Ravenswood to whom you granted the solemn engagement which you now desire to retract and cancel.’

Lucy’s bloodless lips could only falter out the words, ‘It was my mother.’

‘She speaks truly,’ said Lady Ashton, ‘it *was* I who, authorised alike by the laws of God and man, advised her, and concurred with her, to set aside an unhappy and precipitate engagement, and to annul it by the authority of Scripture itself.’

‘Scripture!’ said Ravenswood, scornfully.

‘Let him hear the text,’ said Lady Ashton, appealing to the divine, ‘on which you yourself, with cautious reluctance,

declared the nullity of the pretended engagement insisted upon by this violent man.'

The clergyman took his clasped Bible from his pocket, and read the following words: 'If a woman vow a vow unto the Lord, and bind herself by a bond, being in her father's house in her youth, and her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his peace at her; then all her vows shall stand, and every vow wherewith she hath bound her soul shall stand.'

'And was it not even so with us?' interrupted Ravenswood.

'Control thy impatience, young man,' answered the divine, 'and hear what follows in the sacred text: — "But if her father disallow her in the day that he heareth, not any of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand; and the Lord shall forgive her, because her father disallowed her."'

'And was not,' said Lady Ashton, fiercely and triumphantly breaking in — 'was not ours the case stated in the Holy Writ? Will this person deny, that the instant her parents heard of the vow, or bond, by which our daughter had bound her soul, we disallowed the same in the most express terms, and informed him by writing of our determination?'

'And is this all?' said Ravenswood, looking at Lucy. 'Are you willing to barter sworn faith, the exercise of free will, and the feelings of mutual affection to this wretched hypocritical sophistry?'

'Hear him!' said Lady Ashton, looking to the clergyman — 'hear the blasphemer!'

'May God forgive him,' said Bide-the-Bent, 'and enlighten his ignorance!'

'Hear what I have sacrificed for you,' said Ravenswood, still addressing Lucy, 'ere you sanction what has been done in your name. The honour of an ancient family, the urgent advice of my best friends, have been in vain used to sway my resolution; neither the arguments of reason nor the portents of superstition have shaken my fidelity. The very dead have arisen to warn me, and their warning has been despised. Are you prepared to pierce my heart for its fidelity with the very weapon which my rash confidence entrusted to your grasp?'

'Master of Ravenswood,' said Lady Ashton, 'you have asked what questions you thought fit. You see the total incapacity of my daughter to answer you. But I will reply for her, and in a manner which you cannot dispute. You desire to know



whether Lucy Ashton, of her own free will, desires to annul the engagement into which she has been trepanned. You have her letter under her own hand, demanding the surrender of it ; and, in yet more full evidence of her purpose, here is the contract which she has this morning subscribed, in presence of this reverend gentleman, with Mr. Hayston of Bucklaw.'

Ravenswood gazed upon the deed as if petrified. 'And it was without fraud or compulsion,' said he, looking towards the clergyman, 'that Miss Ashton subscribed this parchment?'

'I vouch it upon my sacred character.'

'This is indeed, madam, an undeniable piece of evidence,' said Ravenswood, sternly ; 'and it will be equally unnecessary and dishonourable to waste another word in useless remonstrance or reproach. There, madam,' he said, laying down before Lucy the signed paper and the broken piece of gold — 'there are the evidences of your first engagement ; may you be more faithful to that which you have just formed. I will trouble you to return the corresponding tokens of my ill-placed confidence ; I ought rather to say, of my egregious folly.'

Lucy returned the scornful glance of her lover with a gaze from which perception seemed to have been banished ; yet she seemed partly to have understood his meaning, for she raised her hands as if to undo a blue ribbon which she wore around her neck. She was unable to accomplish her purpose, but Lady Ashton cut the ribbon asunder, and detached the broken piece of gold, which Miss Ashton had till then worn concealed in her bosom ; the written counterpart of the lovers' engagement she for some time had had in her own possession. With a haughty courtesy, she delivered both to Ravenswood, who was much softened when he took the piece of gold.

'And she could wear it thus,' he said, speaking to himself — 'could wear it in her very bosom — could wear it next to her heart — even when — But complaint avails not,' he said, dashing from his eye the tear which had gathered in it, and resuming the stern composure of his manner. He strode to the chimney, and threw into the fire the paper and piece of gold, stamping upon the coals with the heel of his boot, as if to ensure their destruction. 'I will be no longer,' he then said, 'an intruder here. Your evil wishes, and your worse offices, Lady Ashton, I will only return by hoping these will be your last machinations against your daughter's honour and happiness. And to you, madam,' he said, addressing Lucy, 'I have nothing farther to say, except to pray to God that you may not become a world's

wonder for this 'act of wilful and deliberate perjury.' Having uttered those words, he turned on his heel and left the apartment.

Sir William Ashton, by entreaty and authority, had detained his son and Bucklaw in a distant part of the castle, in order to prevent their again meeting with Ravenswood; but as the Master descended the great staircase, Lockhard delivered him a billet signed 'Sholto Douglas Ashton,' requesting to know where the Master of Ravenswood would be heard of four or five days from hence, as the writer had business of weight to settle with him, so soon as an important family event had taken place.

'Tell Colonel Ashton,' said Ravenswood, composedly, 'I shall be found at Wolf's Crag when his leisure serves him.'

As he descended the outward stair which led from the terrace, he was interrupted a second time by Craigenfelt, who, on the part of his principal, the Laird of Bucklaw, expressed a hope that Ravenswood would not leave Scotland within ten days at least, as he had both former and recent civilities for which to express his gratitude.

'Tell your master,' said Ravenswood, fiercely, 'to choose his own time. He will find me at Wolf's Crag, if his purpose is not forestalled.'

'*My master!*' replied Craigenfelt, encouraged by seeing Colonel Ashton and Bucklaw at the bottom of the terrace. 'Give me leave to say I know of no such person upon earth, nor will I permit such language to be used to me!'

'Seek your master, then, in hell!' exclaimed Ravenswood, giving way to the passion he had hitherto restrained, and throwing Craigenfelt from him with such violence that he rolled down the steps and lay senseless at the foot of them. 'I am a fool,' he instantly added, 'to vent my passion upon a caitiff so worthless.'

He then mounted his horse, which at his arrival he had secured to a balustrade in front of the castle, rode very slowly past Bucklaw and Colonel Ashton, raising his hat as he passed each, and looking in their faces steadily while he offered this mute salutation, which was returned by both with the same stern gravity. Ravenswood walked on with equal deliberation until he reached the head of the avenue, as if to show that he rather courted than avoided interruption. When he had passed the upper gate, he turned his horse, and looked at the castle with a fixed eye; then set spurs to his good steed, and departed with the speed of a demon dismissed by the exorcist.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

Who comes from the bridal chamber?  
It is Azrael, the angel of death.

*Thalaba.*

**A**FTER the dreadful scene that had taken place at the castle, Lucy was transported to her own chamber, where she remained for some time in a state of absolute stupor. Yet afterwards, in the course of the ensuing day, she seemed to have recovered, not merely her spirits and resolution, but a sort of flighty levity, that was foreign to her character and situation, and which was at times chequered by fits of deep silence and melancholy, and of capricious pettishness. Lady Ashton became much alarmed, and consulted the family physicians. But as her pulse indicated no change, they could only say that the disease was on the spirits, and recommended gentle exercise and amusement. Miss Ashton never alluded to what had passed in the state-room. It seemed doubtful even if she was conscious of it, for she was often observed to raise her hands to her neck, as if in search of the ribbon that had been taken from it, and mutter, in surprise and discontent, when she could not find it, 'It was the link that bound me to life.'

Notwithstanding all these remarkable symptoms, Lady Ashton was too deeply pledged to delay her daughter's marriage even in her present state of health. It cost her much trouble to keep up the fair side of appearances towards Bucklaw. She was well aware, that if he once saw any reluctance on her daughter's part, he would break off the treaty, to her great personal shame and dishonour. She therefore resolved that, if Lucy continued passive, the marriage should take place upon the day that had been previously fixed, trusting that a change of place, of situation, and of character would operate a more speedy and effectual cure upon the unsettled spirits of her daughter than could be attained by the slow measures which

the medical men recommended. Sir William Ashton's views of family aggrandisement, and his desire to strengthen himself against the measures of the Marquis of A——, readily induced him to acquiesce in what he could not have perhaps resisted if willing to do so. As for the young men, Bucklaw and Colonel Ashton, they protested that, after what had happened, it would be most dishonourable to postpone for a single hour the time appointed for the marriage, as it would be generally ascribed to their being intimidated by the intrusive visit and threats of Ravenswood.

Bucklaw would indeed have been incapable of such precipitation, had he been aware of the state of Miss Ashton's health, or rather of her mind. But custom, upon these occasions, permitted only brief and sparing intercourse between the bridegroom and the betrothed; a circumstance so well improved by Lady Ashton, that Bucklaw neither saw nor suspected the real state of the health and feelings of his unhappy bride.

On the eve of the bridal day Lucy appeared to have one of her fits of levity, and surveyed with a degree of girlish interest the various preparations of dress, etc. etc., which the different members of the family had prepared for the occasion.

The morning dawned bright and cheerily. The bridal guests assembled in gallant troops from distant quarters. Not only the relations of Sir William Ashton, and the still more dignified connexions of his lady, together with the numerous kinsmen and allies of the bridegroom, were present upon this joyful ceremony, gallantly mounted, arrayed, and caparisoned, but almost every Presbyterian family of distinction within fifty miles made a point of attendance upon an occasion which was considered as giving a sort of triumph over the Marquis of A——, in the person of his kinsman. Splendid refreshments awaited the guests on their arrival, and after these were finished, the cry was 'To horse.' The bride was led forth betwixt her brother Henry and her mother. Her gaiety of the preceding day had given rise to a deep shade of melancholy, which, however, did not misbecome an occasion so momentous. There was a light in her eyes and a colour in her cheek which had not been kindled for many a day, and which, joined to her great beauty, and the splendour of her dress, occasioned her entrance to be greeted with a universal murmur of applause, in which even the ladies could not refrain from joining. While the cavalcade were getting to horse, Sir William Ashton, a man of peace and of form, censured his son Henry for having

begirt himself with a military sword of preposterous length, belonging to his brother, Colonel Ashton.

'If you must have a weapon,' he said, 'upon such a peaceful occasion, why did you not use the short poniard sent from Edinburgh on purpose?'

The boy vindicated himself by saying it was lost.

'You put it out of the way yourself, I suppose,' said his father, 'out of ambition to wear that preposterous thing, which might have served Sir William Wallace. But never mind, get to horse now, and take care of your sister.'

The boy did so, and was placed in the centre of the gallant train. At the time, he was too full of his own appearance, his sword, his laced cloak, his feathered hat, and his managed horse, to pay much regard to anything else; but he afterwards remembered to the hour of his death, that when the hand of his sister, by which she supported herself on the pillion behind him, touched his own, it felt as wet and cold as sepulchral marble.

Glancing wide over hill and dale, the fair bridal procession at last reached the parish church, which they nearly filled; for, besides domestics, above a hundred gentlemen and ladies were present upon the occasion. The marriage ceremony was performed according to the rites of the Presbyterian persuasion, to which Bucklaw of late had judged it proper to conform.

On the outside of the church, a liberal dole was distributed to the poor of the neighbouring parishes, under the direction of Johnnie Mortsheugh, who had lately been promoted from his desolate quarters at the Hermitage to fill the more eligible situation of sexton at the parish church of Ravenswood. Dame Gourlay, with two of her contemporaries, the same who assisted at Alice's late-wake, seated apart upon a flat monument, or 'through-stane,' sate enviously comparing the shares which had been allotted to them in dividing the dole.

'Johnnie Mortsheugh,' said Annie Winnie, 'might hae minded auld lang syne, and thought of his auld kimmers, for as braw as he is with his new black coat. I hae gotten but five herring instead o' sax, and this disna look like a gude saxpennys, and I daresay this bit morsel o' beef is an unce lighter than ony that's been dealt round; and it's a bit o' the tenony hough, mair by token that yours, Maggie, is out o' the back-sey.'

'Mine, quo' she!' mumbled the paralytic hag — 'mine is half banes, I trow. If grit folk gie poor bodies ony thing for coming



to their weddings and burials, it suld be something that wad do them gude, I think.'

'Their gifts,' said Ailsie Gourlay, 'are dealt for nae love of us, nor out of respect for whether we feed or starve. They wad gie us whinstanes for loaves, if it would serve their ain vanity, and yet they expect us to be as gratefu', as they ca' it, as if they served us for true love and liking.'

'And that's truly said,' answered her companion.

'But, Ailsie Gourlay, ye're the auldest o' us three — did ye ever see a mair grand bridal?'

'I winna say that I have,' answered the hag; 'but I think soon to see as braw a burial.'

'And that wad please me as weel,' said Annie Winnie; 'for there's as large a dole, and folk are no obliged to girn and laugh, and mak murgeons, and wish joy to these hellicat quality, that lord it ower us like brute beasts. I like to pack the dead-dole in my lap, and rin ower my auld rhyme —

My loaf in my lap, my penny in my purse,  
Thou art ne'er the better, and I'm ne'er the worse. <sup>1</sup>

'That's right, Annie,' said the paralytic woman; 'God send us a green Yule and a fat kirkyard!'

'But I wad like to ken, Luckie Gourlay, for ye're the auldest and wisest amang us, whilk o' these revellers' turn it will be to be streikit first?'

'D'ye see yon dandilly maiden,' said Dame Gourlay, 'a' glistenin' wi' gowd and jewels, that they are lifting up on the white horse behind that hare-brained callant in scarlet, wi' the lang sword at his side?'

'But that's the bride!' said her companion, her cold heart touched with some sort of compassion — 'that's the very bride hersell! Eh, whow! sae young, sae braw, and sae bonny — and is her time sae short?'

'I tell ye,' said the sibyl, 'her winding sheet is up as high as her throat already, believe it wha list. Her sand has but few grains to rin out; and nae wonder — they've been weel shaken. The leaves are withering fast on the trees, but she'll never see the Martinmas wind gar them dance in swirls like the fairy rings.'

'Ye waited on her for a quarter,' said the paralytic woman, 'and got twa red pieces, or I am far beguiled?'

'Ay, ay,' answered Ailsie, with a bitter grin; 'and Sir

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<sup>1</sup> See Curing by Charms. Note 11.

William Ashton promised me a bonny red gown to the boot o' that — a stake, and a chain, and a tar-barrel, lass! what think ye o' that for a propine? — for being up early and down late for fourscore nights and mair wi' his dwining daughter. But he may keep it for his ain leddy, cummers.'

'I hae heard a sough,' said Annie Winnie, 'as if Leddy Ashton was nae canny body.'

'D'ye see her yonder,' said Dame Gourlay, 'as she prances on her grey gelding out at the kirkyard? There's mair o' utter deevilry in that woman, as brave and fair-fashioned as she rides yonder, than in a' the Scotch witches that ever flew by moonlight ower North Berwick Law.'

'What's that ye say about witches, ye damned hags?' said Johnnie Mortsheugh; 'are ye casting yer cantrips in the very kirkyard, to mischieve the bride and bridegroom? Get awa' hame, for if I tak my souple t'ye, I'll gar ye find the road faster than ye wad like.'

'Hegh, sirs!' answered Ailsie Gourlay; 'how brow are we wi' our new black coat and our weel-pouthered head, as if we had never kenn'd hunger nor thirst ourselfs! and we'll be screwing up our bit fiddle, doubtless, in the ha' the night, amang a' the other elbo'-jiggers for miles round. Let's see if the pins haud, Johnnie — that's a', lad.'

'I take ye a' to witness, gude people,' said Mortsheugh, 'that she threatens me wi' mischief, and forespeaks me. If ony thing but gude happens to me or my fiddle this night, I'll make it the blackest night's job she ever stirred in. I'll hae her before presbytery and synod: I'm half a minister myself, now that I'm a bedral in an inhabited parish.'

Although the mutual hatred betwixt these hags and the rest of mankind had steeled their hearts against all impressions of festivity, this was by no means the case with the multitude at large. The splendour of the bridal retinue, the gay dresses, the spirited horses, the blithesome appearance of the handsome women and gallant gentlemen assembled upon the occasion, had the usual effect upon the minds of the populace. The repeated shouts of 'Ashton and Bucklaw for ever!' the discharge of pistols, guns, and musketoons, to give what was called the bridal shot, evinced the interest the people took in the occasion of the cavalcade, as they accompanied it upon their return to the castle. If there was here and there an elder peasant or his wife who sneered at the pomp of the upstart family, and remembered the days of the long-descended

Ravenswoods, even they, attracted by the plentiful cheer which the castle that day afforded to rich and poor, held their way thither, and acknowledged, notwithstanding their prejudices, the influence of *l'Amphitrion où l'on dîne*.

Thus accompanied with the attendance both of rich and poor, Lucy returned to her father's house. Bucklaw used his privilege of riding next to the bride, but, new to such a situation, rather endeavoured to attract attention by the display of his person and horsemanship, than by any attempt to address her in private. They reached the castle in safety, amid a thousand joyous acclamations.

It is well known that the weddings of ancient days were celebrated with a festive publicity rejected by the delicacy of modern times. The marriage guests, on the present occasion, were regaled with a banquet of unbounded profusion, the relics of which, after the domestics had feasted in their turn, were distributed among the shouting crowd, with as many barrels of ale as made the hilarity without correspond to that within the castle. The gentlemen, according to the fashion of the times, indulged, for the most part, in deep draughts of the richest wines, while the ladies, prepared for the ball which always closed a bridal entertainment, impatiently expected their arrival in the state gallery. At length the social party broke up at a late hour, and the gentlemen crowded into the saloon, where, enlivened by wine and the joyful occasion, they laid aside their swords and handed their impatient partners to the floor. The music already rung from the gallery, along the fretted roof of the ancient state apartment. According to strict etiquette, the bride ought to have opened the ball; but Lady Ashton, making an apology on account of her daughter's health, offered her own hand to Bucklaw as substitute for her daughter's.

But as Lady Ashton raised her head gracefully, expecting the strain at which she was to begin the dance, she was so much struck by an unexpected alteration in the ornaments of the apartment that she was surprised into an exclamation — 'Who has dared to change the pictures?'

All looked up, and those who knew the usual state of the apartment observed, with surprise, that the picture of Sir William Ashton's father was removed from its place, and in its stead that of old Sir Malise Ravenswood seemed to frown wrath and vengeance upon the party assembled below. The exchange must have been made while the apartments were

empty, but had not been observed until the torches and lights in the sconces were kindled for the ball. The haughty and heated spirits of the gentlemen led them to demand an immediate inquiry into the cause of what they deemed an affront to their host and to themselves; but Lady Ashton, recovering herself, passed it over as the freak of a crazy wench who was maintained about the castle, and whose susceptible imagination had been observed to be much affected by the stories which Dame Gourlay delighted to tell concerning 'the former family,' so Lady Ashton named the Ravenswoods. The obnoxious picture was immediately removed, and the ball was opened by Lady Ashton, with a grace and dignity which supplied the charms of youth, and almost verified the extravagant encomiums of the elder part of the company, who extolled her performance as far exceeding the dancing of the rising generation.

When Lady Ashton sat down, she was not surprised to find that her daughter had left the apartment, and she herself followed, eager to obviate any impression which might have been made upon her nerves by an incident so likely to affect them as the mysterious transposition of the portraits. Apparently she found her apprehensions groundless, for she returned in about an hour, and whispered the bridegroom, who extricated himself from the dancers, and vanished from the apartment. The instruments now played their loudest strains; the dancers pursued their exercise with all the enthusiasm inspired by youth, mirth, and high spirits, when a cry was heard so shrill and piercing as at once to arrest the dance and the music. All stood motionless; but when the yell was again repeated, Colonel Ashton snatched a torch from the sconce, and demanding the key of the bridal-chamber from Henry, to whom, as bride's-man, it had been entrusted, rushed thither, followed by Sir William and Lady Ashton, and one or two others, near relations of the family. The bridal guests waited their return in stupified amazement.

Arrived at the door of the apartment, Colonel Ashton knocked and called, but received no answer except stifled groans. He hesitated no longer to open the door of the apartment, in which he found opposition from something which lay against it. When he had succeeded in opening it, the body of the bridegroom was found lying on the threshold of the bridal chamber, and all around was flooded with blood. A cry of surprise and horror was raised by all present; and

the company, excited by this new alarm, began to rush tumultuously towards the sleeping apartment. Colonel Ashton, first whispering to his mother — ‘Search for her; she has murdered him!’ drew his sword, planted himself in the passage, and declared he would suffer no man to pass excepting the clergyman and a medical person present. By their assistance, Bucklaw, who still breathed, was raised from the ground, and transported to another apartment, where his friends, full of suspicion and murmuring, assembled round him to learn the opinion of the surgeon.

In the meanwhile, Lady Ashton, her husband, and their assistants in vain sought Lucy in the bridal bed and in the chamber. There was no private passage from the room, and they began to think that she must have thrown herself from the window, when one of the company, holding his torch lower than the rest, discovered something white in the corner of the great old-fashioned chimney of the apartment. Here they found the unfortunate girl seated, or rather couched like a hare upon its form — her head-gear dishevelled, her night-clothes torn and dabbled with blood, her eyes glazed, and her features convulsed into a wild paroxysm of insanity. When she saw herself discovered, she gibbered, made mouths, and pointed at them with her bloody fingers, with the frantic gestures of an exulting demoniac.

Female assistance was now hastily summoned; the unhappy bride was overpowered, not without the use of some force. As they carried her over the threshold, she looked down, and uttered the only articulate words that she had yet spoken, saying with a sort of grinning exultation — ‘So, you have ta’en up your bonny bridegroom?’ She was, by the shuddering assistants, conveyed to another and more retired apartment, where she was secured as her situation required, and closely watched. The unutterable agony of the parents, the horror and confusion of all who were in the castle, the fury of contending passions between the friends of the different parties — passions augmented by previous intemperance — surpass description.

The surgeon was the first who obtained something like a patient hearing; he pronounced that the wound of Bucklaw, though severe and dangerous, was by no means fatal, but might readily be rendered so by disturbance and hasty removal. This silenced the numerous party of Bucklaw’s friends, who had previously insisted that he should, at all



rates, be transported from the castle to the nearest of their houses. They still demanded, however, that, in consideration of what had happened, four of their number should remain to watch over the sick-bed of their friend, and that a suitable number of their domestics, well armed, should also remain in the castle. This condition being acceded to on the part of Colonel Ashton and his father, the rest of the bridegroom's friends left the castle, notwithstanding the hour and the darkness of the night. The cares of the medical man were next employed in behalf of Miss Ashton, whom he pronounced to be in a very dangerous state. Farther medical assistance was immediately summoned. All night she remained delirious. On the morning, she fell into a state of absolute insensibility. The next evening, the physicians said, would be the crisis of her malady. It proved so; for although she awoke from her trance with some appearance of calmness, and suffered her night-clothes to be changed, or put in order, yet, so soon as she put her hand to her neck, as if to search for the fatal blue ribbon, a tide of recollections seemed to rush upon her, which her mind and body were alike incapable of bearing. Convulsion followed convulsion, till they closed in death, without her being able to utter a word explanatory of the fatal scene.

The provincial judge of the district arrived the day after the young lady had expired, and executed, though with all possible delicacy to the afflicted family, the painful duty of inquiring into this fatal transaction. But there occurred nothing to explain the general hypothesis that the bride, in a sudden fit of insanity, had stabbed the bridegroom at the threshold of the apartment. The fatal weapon was found in the chamber smeared with blood. It was the same poniard which Henry should have worn on the wedding-day, and which his unhappy sister had probably contrived to secrete on the preceding evening, when it had been shown to her among other articles of preparation for the wedding.

The friends of Bucklaw expected that on his recovery he would throw some light upon this dark story, and eagerly pressed him with inquiries, which for some time he evaded under pretext of weakness. When, however, he had been transported to his own house, and was considered as in a state of convalescence, he assembled those persons, both male and female, who had considered themselves as entitled to press him on this subject, and returned them thanks for the interest they had exhibited in his behalf, and their offers of adherence and

support. 'I wish you all,' he said, 'my friends, to understand, however, that I have neither story to tell nor injuries to avenge. If a lady shall question me henceforward upon the incidents of that unhappy night, I shall remain silent, and in future consider her as one who has shown herself desirous to break off her friendship with me; in a word, I will never speak to her again. But if a gentleman shall ask me the same question, I shall regard the incivility as equivalent to an invitation to meet him in the Duke's Walk,<sup>1</sup> and I expect that he will rule himself accordingly.'

A declaration so decisive admitted no commentary; and it was soon after seen that Bucklaw had arisen from the bed of sickness a sadder and a wiser man than he had hitherto shown himself. He dismissed Craigengelt from his society, but not without such a provision as, if well employed, might secure him against indigence and against temptation.

Bucklaw afterwards went abroad, and never returned to Scotland; nor was he known ever to hint at the circumstances attending his fatal marriage. By many readers this may be deemed overstrained, romantic, and composed by the wild imagination of an author desirous of gratifying the popular appetite for the horrible; but those who are read in the private family history of Scotland during the period in which the scene is laid, will readily discover, through the disguise of borrowed names and added incidents, the leading particulars of

AN OWER TRUE TALE.

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<sup>1</sup> See Note 12.

## CHAPTER XXXV

Whose mind 's so marbled, and his heart so hard,  
That would not, when this huge mishap was heard,  
To th' utmost note of sorrow set their song,  
To see a gallant, with so great a grace,  
So suddenly unthought on, so o'erthrown,  
And so to perish, in so poor a place,  
By too rash riding in a ground unknown !

POEM, IN NISBET'S *Heraldry*, vol. ii.

WE have anticipated the course of time to mention Bucklaw's recovery and fate, that we might not interrupt the detail of events which succeeded the funeral of the unfortunate Lucy Ashton. This melancholy ceremony was performed in the misty dawn of an autumnal morning, with such moderate attendance and ceremony as could not possibly be dispensed with. A very few of the nearest relations attended her body to the same church-yard to which she had lately been led as a bride, with as little free will, perhaps, as could be now testified by her lifeless and passive remains. An aisle adjacent to the church had been fitted up by Sir William Ashton as a family cemetery ; and here, in a coffin bearing neither name nor date, were consigned to dust the remains of what was once lovely, beautiful, and innocent, though exasperated to frenzy by a long tract of unremitting persecution.

While the mourners were busy in the vault, the three village lads, who, notwithstanding the unwonted earliness of the hour, had snuffed the carrion like vultures, were seated on the 'through-stane,' and engaged in their wonted unhallowed conference.

'Did not I say,' said Dame Gourlay, 'that the braw bridal would be followed by as braw a funeral ?'

'I think,' answered Dame Winnie, 'there's little bravery at it : neither meat nor drink, and just a wheen silver tippences to the poor folk ; it was little worth while to come sae far road for sae smá' profit, and us sae frail.'

'Out, wretch!' replied Dame Gourlay, 'can a' the dainties they could gie us be half sae sweet as this hour's vengeance? There they are that were capering on their prancing nags four days since, and they are now ganging as dreigh and sober as oursells the day. They were a' glistening wi' gowd and silver; they're now as black as the crook. And Miss Lucy Ashton, that grudged when an honest woman came near her — a taid may sit on her coffin the day, and she can never scunner when he croaks. And Lady Ashton has hell-fire burning in her breast by this time; and Sir William, wi' his gibbets, and his faggots, and his chains, how likes he the witcheries of his ain dwelling-house?'

'And is it true, then,' mumbled the paralytic wretch, 'that the bride was trailed out of her bed and up the chimley by evil spirits, and that the bridegroom's face was wrung round ahint him?'

'Ye needna care wha did it, or how it was done,' said Ailsie Gourlay; 'but I'll uphaud it for nae stickit<sup>1</sup> job, and that the lairds and leddies ken weel this day.'

'And was it true,' said Annie Winnie, 'sin ye ken sae muckle about it, that the picture of auld Sir Malise Ravenswood came down on the ha' floor, and led out the brawl before them a'?''

'Na,' said Ailsie; 'but into the ha' came the picture — and I ken weel how it came there — to gie them a warning that pride wad get a fa'. But there's as queer a ploy, cummers, as ony o' thae, that's gaun on even now in the burial vault yonder: ye saw twall mourners, wi' crape and cloak, gang down the steps pair and pair?'

'What should ail us to see them?' said the one old woman.

'I counted them,' said the other, with the eagerness of a person to whom the spectacle had afforded too much interest to be viewed with indifference.

'But ye did not see,' said Ailsie, exulting in her superior observation, 'that there's a thirteenth amang them that they ken naething about; and, if auld freits say true, there's ane o' that company that'll no be lang for this warld. But come awa', cummers; if we bide here, I'se warrant we get the wyte o' whatever ill comes of it, and that gude will come of it nane o' them need ever think to see.'

And thus, croaking like the ravens when they anticipate pestilence, the ill-boding sibyls withdrew from the churchyard.

In fact, the mourners, when the service of interment was

<sup>1</sup> *Stickit*, imperfect.

ended, discovered that there was among them one more than the invited number, and the remark was communicated in whispers to each other. The suspicion fell upon a figure which, muffled in the same deep mourning with the others, was reclined, almost in a state of insensibility, against one of the pillars of the sepulchral vault. The relatives of the Ashton family were expressing in whispers their surprise and displeasure at the intrusion, when they were interrupted by Colonel Ashton, who, in his father's absence, acted as principal mourner. 'I know,' he said in a whisper, 'who this person is; he has, or shall soon have, as deep cause of mourning as ourselves; leave me to deal with him, and do not disturb the ceremony by unnecessary exposure.' So saying, he separated himself from the group of his relations, and taking the unknown mourner by the cloak, he said to him, in a tone of suppressed emotion, 'Follow me.'

The stranger, as if starting from a trance at the sound of his voice, mechanically obeyed, and they ascended the broken ruinous stair which led from the sepulchre into the churchyard. The other mourners followed, but remained grouped together at the door of the vault, watching with anxiety the motions of Colonel Ashton and the stranger, who now appeared to be in close conference beneath the shade of a yew-tree, in the most remote part of the burial-ground.

To this sequestered spot Colonel Ashton had guided the stranger, and then turning round, addressed him in a stern and composed tone. — 'I cannot doubt that I speak to the Master of Ravenswood?' No answer was returned. 'I cannot doubt,' resumed the Colonel, trembling with rising passion, 'that I speak to the murderer of my sister?'

'You have named me but too truly,' said Ravenswood, in a hollow and tremulous voice.

'If you repent what you have done,' said the Colonel, 'may your penitence avail you before God; with me it shall serve you nothing. Here,' he said, giving a paper, 'is the measure of my sword, and a memorandum of the time and place of meeting. Sunrise to-morrow morning, on the links to the east of Wolf's Hope.'

The Master of Ravenswood held the paper in his hand, and seemed irresolute. At length he spoke — 'Do not,' he said, 'urge to farther desperation a wretch who is already desperate. Enjoy your life while you can, and let me seek my death from another.'

'That you never, never shall!' said Douglas Ashton. 'You



shall die by my hand, or you shall complete the ruin of my family by taking my life. If you refuse my open challenge, there is no advantage I will not take of you, no indignity with which I will not load you, until the very name of Ravenswood shall be the sign of everything that is dishonourable, as it is already of all that is villainous.

‘That it shall never be,’ said Ravenswood, fiercely; ‘if I am the last who must bear it, I owe it to those who once owned it that the name shall be extinguished without infamy. I accept your challenge, time, and place of meeting. We meet, I presume, alone?’

‘Alone we meet,’ said Colonel Ashton, ‘and alone will the survivor of us return from that place of rendezvous.’

‘Then God have mercy on the soul of him who falls!’ said Ravenswood.

‘So be it!’ said Colonel Ashton; ‘so far can my charity reach even for the man I hate most deadly, and with the deepest reason. Now, break off, for we shall be interrupted. The links by the sea-shore to the east of Wolf’s Hope; the hour, sunrise; our swords our only weapons.’

‘Enough,’ said the Master, ‘I will not fail you.’

They separated; Colonel Ashton joining the rest of the mourners, and the Master of Ravenswood taking his horse, which was tied to a tree behind the church. Colonel Ashton returned to the castle with the funeral guests, but found a pretext for detaching himself from them in the evening, when, changing his dress to a riding-habit, he rode to Wolf’s Hope that night, and took up his abode in the little inn, in order that he might be ready for his rendezvous in the morning.

It is not known how the Master of Ravenswood disposed of the rest of that unhappy day. Late at night, however, he arrived at Wolf’s Crag, and aroused his old domestic, Caley Balderstone, who had ceased to expect his return. Confused and flying rumours of the late tragical death of Miss Ashton, and of its mysterious cause, had already reached the old man, who was filled with the utmost anxiety, on account of the probable effect these events might produce upon the mind of his master.

The conduct of Ravenswood did not alleviate his apprehensions. To the butler’s trembling entreaties that he would take some refreshment, he at first returned no answer, and then suddenly and fiercely demanding wine, he drank, contrary

to his habits, a very large draught. Seeing that his master would eat nothing, the old man affectionately entreated that he would permit him to light him to his chamber. It was not until the request was three or four times repeated that Ravenswood made a mute sign of compliance. But when Balderstone conducted him to an apartment which had been comfortably fitted up, and which, since his return, he had usually occupied, Ravenswood stopped short on the threshold.

‘Not here,’ said he, sternly; ‘show me the room in which my father died; the room in which *SHE* slept the night they were at the castle.’

‘Who, sir?’ said Caleb, too terrified to preserve his presence of mind.

‘*She*, Lucy Ashton! Would you kill me, old man, by forcing me to repeat her name?’

Caleb would have said something of the disrepair of the chamber, but was silenced by the irritable impatience which was expressed in his master’s countenance; he lighted the way trembling and in silence, placed the lamp on the table of the deserted room, and was about to attempt some arrangement of the bed, when his master bid him begone in a tone that admitted of no delay. The old man retired, not to rest, but to prayer; and from time to time crept to the door of the apartment, in order to find out whether Ravenswood had gone to repose. His measured heavy step upon the floor was only interrupted by deep groans; and the repeated stamps of the heel of his heavy boot intimated too clearly that the wretched inmate was abandoning himself at such moments to paroxysms of uncontrolled agony. The old man thought that the morning, for which he longed, would never have dawned; but time, whose course rolls on with equal current, however it may seem more rapid or more slow to mortal apprehension, brought the dawn at last, and spread a ruddy light on the broad verge of the glistening ocean. It was early in November, and the weather was serene for the season of the year. But an easterly wind had prevailed during the night, and the advancing tide rolled nearer than usual to the foot of the crags on which the castle was founded.

With the first peep of light, Caleb Balderstone again resorted to the door of Ravenswood’s sleeping apartment, through a chink of which he observed him engaged in measuring the length of two or three swords which lay in a closet adjoining to the apartment. He muttered to himself, as he selected one of these

weapons — ‘It is shorter : let him have this advantage, as he has every other.’

Caleb Balderstone knew too well, from what he witnessed, upon what enterprise his master was bound, and how vain all interference on his part must necessarily prove. He had but time to retreat from the door, so nearly was he surprised by his master suddenly coming out and descending to the stables. The faithful domestic followed ; and, from the dishevelled appearance of his master’s dress, and his ghastly looks, was confirmed in his conjecture that he had passed the night without sleep or repose. He found him busily engaged in saddling his horse, a service from which Caleb, though with faltering voice and trembling hands, offered to relieve him. Ravenswood rejected his assistance by a mute sign, and having led the animal into the court, was just about to mount him, when the old domestic’s fear giving way to the strong attachment which was the principal passion of his mind, he flung himself suddenly at Ravenswood’s feet, and clasped his knees, while he exclaimed, ‘Oh, sir ! oh, master ! kill me if you will, but do not go out on this dreadful errand ! Oh ! my dear master, wait but this day ; the Marquis of A—— comes to-morrow, and a’ will be remedied.’

‘You have no longer a master, Caleb,’ said Ravenswood, endeavouring to extricate himself ; ‘why, old man, would you cling to a falling tower ?’

‘But I *have* a master,’ cried Caleb, still holding him fast, ‘while the heir of Ravenswood breathes. I am but a servant ; but I was born your father’s — your grandfather’s servant. I was born for the family — I have lived for them — I would die for them ! Stay but at home, and all will be well !’

‘Well, fool ! well !’ said Ravenswood. ‘Vain old man, nothing hereafter in life will be well with me, and happiest is the hour that shall soonest close it !’

So saying, he extricated himself from the old man’s hold, threw himself on his horse, and rode out at the gate ; but instantly turning back, he threw towards Caleb, who hastened to meet him, a heavy purse of gold.

‘Caleb !’ he said, with a ghastly smile, ‘I make you my executor’ ; and again turning his bridle, he resumed his course down the hill.

The gold fell unheeded on the pavement, for the old man ran to observe the course which was taken by his master, who turned to the left down a small and broken path, which gained the sea-shore through a cleft in the rock, and led to a sort of

cove where, in former times, the boats of the castle were wont to be moored. Observing him take this course, Caleb hastened to the eastern battlement, which commanded the prospect of the whole sands, very near as far as the village of Wolf's Hope. He could easily see his master riding in that direction, as fast as the horse could carry him. The prophecy at once rushed on Balderstone's mind, that the Lord of Ravenswood should perish on the Kelpie's flow, which lay half-way betwixt the Tower and the links, or sand knolls, to the northward of Wolf's Hope. He saw him accordingly reach the fatal spot ; but he never saw him pass further.

Colonel Ashton, frantic for revenge, was already in the field, pacing the turf with eagerness, and looking with impatience towards the Tower for the arrival of his antagonist. The sun had now risen, and showed its broad disk above the eastern sea, so that he could easily discern the horseman who rode towards him with speed which argued impatience equal to his own. At once the figure became invisible, as if it had melted into the air. He rubbed his eyes, as if he had witnessed an apparition, and then hastened to the spot, near which he was met by Balderstone, who came from the opposite direction. No trace whatever of horse or rider could be discerned ; it only appeared that the late winds and high tides had greatly extended the usual bounds of the quicksand, and that the unfortunate horseman, as appeared from the hoof-tracks, in his precipitated haste, had not attended to keep on the firm sands on the foot of the rock, but had taken the shortest and most dangerous course. One only vestige of his fate appeared. A large sable feather had been detached from his hat, and the rippling waves of the rising tide wafted it to Caleb's feet. The old man took it up, dried it, and placed it in his bosom.

The inhabitants of Wolf's Hope were now alarmed, and crowded to the place, some on shore, and some in boats, but their search availed nothing. The tenacious depths of the quicksand, as is usual in such cases, retained its prey.

Our tale draws to a conclusion. The Marquis of A——, alarmed at the frightful reports that were current, and anxious for his kinsman's safety, arrived on the subsequent day to mourn his loss : and, after renewing in vain a search for the body, returned, to forget what had happened amid the bustle of politics and state affairs.

Not so Caleb Balderstone. If worldly profit could have consoled the old man, his age was better provided for than his earlier life had ever been; but life had lost to him its salt and its savour. His whole course of ideas, his feelings, whether of pride or of apprehension, of pleasure or of pain, had all arisen from his close connexion with the family which was now extinguished. He held up his head no longer, forsook all his usual haunts and occupations, and seemed only to find pleasure in moping about those apartments in the old castle which the Master of Ravenswood had last inhabited. He ate without refreshment, and slumbered without repose; and, with a fidelity sometimes displayed by the canine race, but seldom by human beings, he pined and died within a year after the catastrophe which we have narrated.

The family of Ashton did not long survive that of Ravenswood. Sir William Ashton outlived his eldest son, the Colonel, who was slain in a duel in Flanders; and Henry, by whom he was succeeded, died unmarried. Lady Ashton lived to the verge of extreme old age, the only survivor of the group of unhappy persons whose misfortunes were owing to her implacability. That she might internally feel compunction, and reconcile herself with Heaven, whom she had offended, we will not, and we dare not, deny; but to those around her she did not evince the slightest symptom either of repentance or remorse. In all external appearance she bore the same bold, haughty, unbending character which she had displayed before these unhappy events. A splendid marble monument records her name, titles, and virtues, while her victims remain undistinguished by tomb or epitaph.





## NOTES TO THE BRIDE OF LAMMERMOOR

### NOTE 1. — THE FAMILY OF STAIR, p. ix

[It may be regretted that the Author had not adhered to his original purpose as here stated. In his Introduction to the *Chronicles of the Canon-gate*, when referring to the sources or materials of his novels, he says, 'I may mention, for example's sake, that the terrible catastrophe of the *Bride of Lammermoor* actually occurred in a Scottish family of rank. . . . It is unnecessary further to withdraw the real veil from this scene of family distress, nor, although it occurred more than a hundred years since, might it be altogether agreeable to the representatives of the families concerned in the narrative. It may be proper to say, that the events are imitated; \*but I had neither the means nor intention of copying the manners, or tracing the characters, of the persons concerned in the real story.'

The regret, however, is not in his stating that the tragical event said to have happened in the family of Dalrymple of Stair in 1669 had suggested the catastrophe, but in seemingly connecting the story itself with the history of that family, by quoting so fully the scandal and satirical verses of a later period. — *Laing*.]

### NOTE 2. — SIR G. LOCKHART, p. 38

President of the Court of Session. He was pistolled in the High Street of Edinburgh, by John Chiesley of Dalry, in the year 1689. The revenge of this desperate man was stimulated by an opinion that he had sustained injustice in a decret-arbitral pronounced by the President, assigning an alimentary provision of about £93 in favour of his wife and children. He is said at first to have designed to shoot the judge while attending upon divine worship, but was diverted by some feeling concerning the sanctity of the place. After the congregation was dismissed, he dogged his victim as far as the head of the close, on the south side of the Lawnmarket, in which the President's house was situated, and shot him dead as he was about to enter it. This act was done in the presence of numerous spectators. The assassin made no attempt to fly, but boasted of the deed, saying, 'I have taught the President how to do justice.' He had at least given him fair warning, as Jack Cade says on a similar occasion. The murderer, after undergoing the torture, by a special act of the Estates of Parliament, was tried before the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, as high sheriff, and condemned to be dragged on a hurdle to the place of execution, to have his right hand struck off while he yet lived, and, finally, to be hung on the gallows with the pistol wherewith he shot the President tied round his neck. This execution took place on the 3d of April 1689; and the incident was long remembered as a dreadful instance of what the law books call the *perfidium ingenium Scotorum*.

## NOTE 3. — THE BALLANTYNES, p. 81

James Ballantyne, the eminent printer, was the eldest of three sons of a small merchant in Kelso. He was born in 1772, and became acquainted with Sir Walter Scott so early as 1784, when attending the grammar school. Having established a printing office, he started a local newspaper, called the *Kelso Mail*; and in 1799 there issued from his press Scott's *Apology for Tales of Terror*, of which only twelve copies were thrown off. This was followed by the first edition of the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* in 1802, a work that was considered such an admirable specimen of typography that Ballantyne was induced to remove to Edinburgh, where for thirty years he carried on a printing establishment with great success, leaving his younger brother Alexander at Kelso to look after the newspaper.

John Ballantyne, the second son, was born in 1774. He commenced his career at Kelso, in September 1813, by the sale of that portion of the celebrated library of John Duke of Roxburgh which remained at Fleurs Castle. On coming to Edinburgh, he was for a time connected with the printing office; but afterwards turned auctioneer and bookseller, and became the publisher of several of Scott's Poems and Novels. 'Jocund Johnny,' as Scott sometimes called him, was a person of a volatile and joyous disposition, a most amusing companion, having the credit of being the best story-teller of his time. The state of his health, however, obliged him to relinquish business, and he died 16th June 1821.

James, who devoted much of his time to theatrical criticism and journalism, died within four months of Sir Walter Scott, in January 1833. He assisted the Author of these novels in revising the proof sheets and suggesting minute corrections (*Laing*).

## NOTE 4. — GEORGE BUCHANAN'S JESTS, p. 110

Referring probably to a popular chap-book, entitled *The Witty and Entertaining Exploits of George Buchanan, who was commonly called the King's Fool; the whole six parts complete*, 1781. This character was jester to Charles I., and must not be mistaken for his learned namesake (*Laing*).

## NOTE 5. — RAID OF CALEB BALDERSTONE, p. 131

The raid of Caleb Balderstone on the cooper's kitchen has been universally considered on the southern side of the Tweed as grotesquely and absurdly extravagant. The Author can only say, that a similar anecdote was communicated to him, with date and names of the parties, by a noble earl lately deceased, whose remembrances of former days, both in Scotland and England, while they were given with a felicity and power of humour never to be forgotten by those who had the happiness of meeting his lordship in familiar society, were especially invaluable from their extreme accuracy.

Speaking after my kind and lamented informer, with the omission of names only, the anecdote ran thus:—There was a certain bachelor gentleman in one of the midland counties of Scotland, second son of an ancient family, who lived on the fortune of a second son, *videlicet*, upon some miserably small annuity, which yet was so managed and stretched out by the expedients of his man John, that his master kept the front rank with all the young men of quality in the county, and hunted, dined, dined, and drank with them upon apparently equal terms.

It is true that, as the master's society was extremely amusing, his friends contrived to reconcile his man John to accept assistance of various kinds 'under the rose,' which they dared not to have directly offered to his mas-

ter. Yet, very consistently with all this good inclination to John and John's master, it was thought among the young fox-hunters that it would be an excellent jest, if possible, to take John at fault.

With this intention, and, I think, in consequence of a bet, a party of four or five of these youngsters arrived at the bachelor's little mansion, which was adjacent to a considerable village. Here they alighted a short while before the dinner hour—for it was judged regular to give John's ingenuity a fair start—and, rushing past the astonished domestic, entered the little parlour; and, telling some concerted story of the cause of their invasion, the self-invited guests asked their landlord if he could let them have some dinner. Their friend gave them a hearty and unembarrassed reception, and for the matter of dinner, referred them to John. He was summoned accordingly; received his master's orders to get dinner ready for the party who had thus unexpectedly arrived; and, without changing a muscle of his countenance, promised prompt obedience. Great was the speculation of the visitors, and probably of the landlord also, what was to be the issue of John's fair promises. Some of the more curious had taken a peep into the kitchen, and could see nothing there to realise the prospect held out by the major-domo. But, punctual as the dinner hour struck on the village clock, John placed before them a stately rump of boiled beef, with a proper accompaniment of greens, amply sufficient to dine the whole party, and to decide the bet against those among the visitors who expected to take John napping. The explanation was the same as in the case of Caleb Balderstone. John had used the freedom to carry off the kail-pot of a rich old chuff in the village, and brought it to his master's house, leaving the proprietor and his friends to dine on bread and cheese; and, as John said, 'good enough for them.' The fear of giving offence to so many persons of distinction kept the poor man sufficiently quiet, and he was afterwards remunerated by some indirect patronage, so that the jest was admitted a good one on all sides. In England, at any period, or in some parts of Scotland at the present day, it might not have passed off so well.

#### NOTE 6. — ANCIENT HOSPITALITY, p. 135

It was once the universal custom to place ale, wine, or some strong liquor in the chamber of an honoured guest, to assuage his thirst, should he feel any on awakening in the night, which, considering that the hospitality of that period often reached excess, was by no means unlikely. The Author has met some instances of it in former days, and in old-fashioned families. It was, perhaps, no poetic fiction that records how

My cummer and I lay down to sleep  
With two pint-stoups at our bed-feet;  
And aye when we waken'd we drank them dry:  
What think you o' my cummer and I?

It is a current story in Teviotdale, that in the house of an ancient family of distinction, much addicted to the Presbyterian cause, a Bible was always put into the sleeping apartment of the guests, along with a bottle of strong ale. On some occasion there was a meeting of clergymen in the vicinity of the castle, all of whom were invited to dinner by the worthy baronet, and several abode all night. According to the fashion of the times, seven of the reverend guests were allotted to one large barrack-room, which was used on such occasions of extended hospitality. The butler took care that the divines were presented, according to custom, each with a Bible and a bottle of ale. But after a little consultation among themselves, they are said to have recalled the domestic as he was leaving the apartment. 'My friend,' said one of the venerable guests, 'you must know, when we meet together as brethren, the youngest minister reads aloud a portion of Scripture to

the rest; only one Bible, therefore, is necessary; take away the other six, and in their place bring six more bottles of ale.'

This synod would have suited the 'hermit sage' of Johnson, who answered a pupil who inquired for the real road to happiness with the celebrated line,

Come, my lad, and drink some beer!

#### NOTE 7. — APPEAL TO PARLIAMENT, p. 149

The power of appeal from the Court of Session, the supreme Judges of Scotland, to the Scottish Parliament, in cases of civil right, was fiercely debated before the Union. It was a privilege highly desirable for the subject, as the examination and occasional reversal of their sentences in Parliament might serve as a check upon the judges, which they greatly required at a time when they were much more distinguished for legal knowledge than for uprightness and integrity.

The members of the Faculty of Advocates (so the Scottish barristers are termed), in the year 1674, incurred the violent displeasure of the Court of Session, on account of their refusal to renounce the right of appeal to Parliament; and, by a very arbitrary procedure, the majority of the number were banished from Edinburgh, and consequently deprived of their professional practice, for several sessions, or terms. But, by the articles of the Union, an appeal to the British House of Peers has been secured to the Scottish subject, and that right has, no doubt, had its influence in forming the impartial and independent character which, much contrary to the practice of their predecessors, the Judges of the Court of Session have since displayed.

It is easy to conceive that an old lawyer like the Lord Keeper in the text should feel alarm at the judgments given in his favour, upon grounds of strict penal law, being brought to appeal under a new and dreaded procedure in a Court eminently impartial, and peculiarly moved by considerations of equity.

In earlier editions of this Work, this legal distinction was not sufficiently explained.

#### NOTE 8. — POOR-MAN-OF-MUTTON, p. 172

The blade-bone of a shoulder of mutton is called in Scotland 'a poor man,' as in some parts of England it is termed 'a poor knight of Windsor'; in contrast, it must be presumed, to the baronial Sir Loin. It is said that, in the last age, an old Scottish peer, whose conditions (none of the most gentle) were marked by a strange and fierce-looking exaggeration of the Highland countenance, chanced to be indisposed while he was in London attending Parliament. The master of the hotel where he lodged, anxious to show attention to his noble guest, waited on him to enumerate the contents of his well-stocked larder, so as to endeavour to hit on something which might suit his appetite. 'I think, landlord,' said his lordship, rising up from his couch, and throwing back the tartan plaid with which he had screened his grim and ferocious visage—'I think I could eat a morsel of a *poor man*.' The landlord fled in terror, having no doubt that his guest was a cannibal, who might be in the habit of eating a slice of a tenant, as light food, when he was under regimen.

#### NOTE 9. — MIDDLETON'S 'MAD WORLD,' p. 204

Hereupon I, Jedediah Cleishbotham, crave leave to remark *primo*, which signifies, in the first place, that, having in vain inquired at the circulating library in Gandercleugh, albeit it aboundeth in similar vanities, for this samyn Middleton and his *Mad World*, it was at length shown unto me



amongst other ancient fooleries carefully compiled by one Dodsley,<sup>1</sup> who, doubtless, hath his reward for neglect of precious time; and having misused so much of mine as was necessary for the purpose, I therein found that a play-man is brought in as a footman, whom a knight is made to greet facetiously with the epithet of 'linen stocking, and three score miles a-day.'

*Secundo*, which is secondly in the vernacular, under Mr. Pattieson's favour, some men not altogether so old as he would represent them, do remember this species of menial, or forerunner. In evidence of which, I, Jedediah Cleishbotham, though mine eyes yet do me good service, remember me to have seen one of this tribe clothed in white, and bearing a staff, who ran daily before the state-coach of the umquihle John Earl of Hopeton, father of this Earl, Charles, that now is; unto whom it may be justly said, that renown playeth the part of a running footman, or precursor; and, as the poet singeth —

Mars standing by asserts his quarrel,  
And Fame flies after with a laurel.

J. C.

NOTE 10. — TRUMPETER MARINE AT SHERIFFMUIR, p. 228

The battle of Sheriffmuir, which took place in November 1715, was claimed as a victory by both sides. This gave rise to a clever popular song printed at the time as a broadside, under the title of *A Race at Sheriffmuir, fairly run on the 15th November 1715, to the tune of 'The Horseman's Sport.'*

There's some say that we wan, some say that they wan,  
Some say that nane wan at a', man;  
But one thing I'm sure, that at Sheriffmuir  
A battle there was, which I saw, man.  
And we ran, and they ran, and they ran, and we ran,  
And we ran, and they ran awa', man.

In these satirical verses Trumpeter Marine is introduced, and in proof of Sir Walter's accuracy as to the name, the following note may be added, as recent editors of this ballad have altered it to Maclean: —

In the *Present State of Great Britain*, London, 1710, Francis Marine is second on the list of Queen Anne's Trumpeters for Scotland, while in the volume for 1716 his name occurs among the officers of the king's household, as 'Francis Marine, Sen.,' and there is added as fifth trumpeter, 'Francis Marine, Jun.' These household trumpeters were employed, as they are to this day in the Lyon Office, for announcing royal proclamations, and attending the Circuit Courts of Justiciary. Another son or grandson, named James Marine, continues to appear as trumpeter down to 1785.

The words referred to, in the original ballad of Sheriffmuir, are as follow: —

And Trumpet Marine too, whose breeks were not clean, through  
Misfortune he happen'd to fa', man;  
By saving his neck, his trumpet did break,  
Came off without musick at a', man.  
And we ran, and they ran, etc.

No doubt there was a John Maclean, trumpeter, sent on a message from the rebels to the Duke of Argyle before the battle, but the modern improvers have spoiled the verses both as to rhyme and accuracy; while they have overlooked the description of the trumpeter's dress, which would evidently indicate his not being a Highlander (*Laing*).

<sup>1</sup> See Dodsley's *Collection of Old Plays*, vol. v. p. 307 (*Laing*).

## NOTE 11. — CURING BY CHARMS, p. 299

Reginald Scott tells of an old woman who performed so many cures by means of a charm that she was suspected of witchcraft. Her mode of practice being inquired into, it was found that the only fee which she would accept of was a loaf of bread and a silver penny ; and that the potent charm with which she wrought so many cures was the doggerel couplet in the text.

## NOTE 12. — DUKE'S WALK, p. 305

A walk in the vicinity of Holyrood House, so called, because often frequented by the Duke of York, afterwards James II., during his residence in Scotland. It was for a long time the usual place of rendezvous for settling affairs of honour.

# GLOSSARY

## OF

### WORDS, PHRASES, AND ALLUSIONS

- A BEE**, alone  
**ABLEEZE**, in a blaze  
**ABOON**, **ABUNE**, above, up  
**ABOU HASSAN**. *See The Arabian Nights*: 'The Sleeper Awakened'  
**ADJUDICATION**, an action for seizing upon a heritable estate as security for a debt—a Scots law term  
**AD RE-ÆDIFICANDAM** (p. 95), to set up an ancient house again  
**AE**, one  
**AGÉ**, to act as may be necessary and legal—a Scots law term  
**AIL**, to interfere with, prevent  
**AIN**, own  
**ALRT**, to direct, turn; a point  
**AITs**, oats; **AIT-CAKE**, oat-cake  
**AIVER**, or **AYER**, an old broken-winded horse  
**ALEXANDER**, a tragedy by Nathaniel Lee, very popular in the early part of the 18th century  
**ALLENARLY**, solely, alone  
**ANCE**, once  
**ANDREW FERRARA**, a Highland broadsword  
**ANGUS**, **EARL OF**, presumably Archibald, sixth earl, exiled by James V. in 1528  
**ABOUT**, avant  
**ASS**, ash  
**AULD REEKIE**, Edinburgh  
**AVA**, at all  
**AVANT-COURIER**, a fore-runner, messenger sent on in advance  
**AWE**, to owe  
**BACK-SEY**, the sirloin  
**BACKSWORD**, a sword with only one cutting edge  
**BAIRD OF HOPE**, Thomas Campbell, author of *Pleasures of Hope*  
**BASS**, a conspicuous mass of rock in the Firth of Forth, not far from North Berwick  
**BAWBEE**, a halfpenny  
**BEDESMAN**, an alms-man, one that prays for another  
**BEDRAL**, a beadle, sexton  
**BEFLUMM**, to befool, cajole  
**BELL THE CAT**, synonymous with 'Beard the lion in his den.' The phrase originated among the Scottish nobles who conspired to ruin James III.'s favourite, Cochran. *See Scott's Tales of a Grandfather*, chap. xxii.  
**BENDED**, cocked  
**BEND-LEATHER**, thick leather for boot soles  
**BERWICK, DUKE OF**. James Fitz-James, the natural son of King James II. of England, was made a marshal of France  
**BICKER**, a wooden drinking-cup  
**BICKERING (FIRE)**, flickering, quivering  
**BIDE**, to wait, stay  
**BIGGONET**, a linen cap, coif  
**BIRKIE**, a lively little fellow; the game of beggar-my-neighbour  
**BIRLING**, drinking in company  
**BIT AND THE BUFFET**, sustenance with hard usage  
**BLACKAVISED**, black-visaged  
**BLACK-JACK**, a large waxed pitcher for holding ale  
**BLACKNESS**, a castle, and formerly a state prison, situated on the Firth of Forth, Linlithgowshire  
**BLITHE**, cheerful, happy, pleased  
**BOGLE**, a bogie, ghost  
**BOTHWELL BRIG**. *See Old Mortality*, chaps. xxxi. and xxxii.  
**BOUK**, a body, carcase, bulk of body  
**BOUL**, a handle  
**BOUROCK**, a mound, barrow, heap of earth; a miserable hut  
**BRACH**, a hunting-hound  
**BRAE**, a hill; **BRAESIDE**, a hillside  
**BRANDER**, to broil, grill  
**BRAW**, brave, fine  
**BRAWL**, a French dance, cotillion  
**BRENT**, straight and smooth  
**BREWIS**, the scum caused by boiling  
**BREWSTER**, a brewer  
**BRIDE IN**, taken to the bridal chamber  
**BROCHE**, a roasting-spit  
**BRUCE TO KILL A SPIDER**, an allusion to the story of Robert Bruce and the spider  
**BUSK**, to deck, bind up  
**CABAGE**, to cut off a deer's head behind the horns  
**CABRACH**, or **BUCK OF CABRACH**, a mountain near the western boundary of Aberdeenshire  
**CADGY**, cheerful, sportive  
**CAICKLING**, cackling, laughing  
**CALLANT**, a young lad

- CAMPAIGN OF**—*See* Spanish generals
- CAMPVEER**, or **CAMPPIRE**, a small Dutch town on the island of Walcheren, where from 1444 to 1795 the Scots had a privileged trading factory
- CANNON-BIT**, a smooth round bit for horses
- CANNY**, careful, shrewd, useful; (in the negative) peculiar, possessed
- CANTABIT VACUUS**, he may sing before thieves who has empty pockets—*Juvenal*, xi. 22
- CANTRIES**, tricks, spells, incantations
- CANTY**, cheerful, merry
- CAPOT**, to win all the tricks in piquet, a form of exclamation
- CARBONADE**, to broil, grill
- CARCAKE**, a small cake eaten on Shrove Tuesday
- CARLE**, a fellow
- CARLINE**, an old woman, jade
- CAST O'**, kind of
- CASTOR**, a fur hat
- CAUGHT IN THE MANNER**, caught in a criminal act
- CAULD BE MY CAST**, cold be my fate or lot
- CAVESSON**, a horse's nose-band
- CEDANT ARMA TOGÆ**, let arms give place to the insignia of peace
- CHAMBER OF DAIS**, the best bedroom, kept for guests of consideration
- CHANGE A LEG**. In the old coaching days inside passengers changed legs with the consent of their opposite neighbour
- CHANGE-HOUSE**, an inn
- CHAPPIN**, a liquid measure = 1 quart
- CHAPPIT**, struck (of a clock)
- CHÂTEAU QUI PARLE**, etc. (p. 187), when a fortress parleys and a lady listens, both are on the point of surrendering
- CHAUMBER**, a chamber
- CHEEK OF THE CHIMNEY-NOOK**, the fireside, chimney-corner
- CHIELD**, a fellow
- CIRCUS OF ROME**. *See* Green and blue chariots
- CLAVERING**, chattering, talkative
- CLAVERS**, idle talk, gossip
- CLAVER'S**, John Grahame of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee
- CLAW UP YOUR MITTENS**, to finish you, give you the *coup de grâce*
- CLOCKIN HEN**, a sitting hen
- COCKERNONY**, a top-knot
- COG**, to empty or pour out
- COGGING**, quibbling, deceiving, cheating
- COLDINGHAME ABBEY**, or rather Priory, founded by King Edgar in the last years of the 11th century, a few miles from Eyemouth, on the coast of Berwickshire
- COMMONTY**, right of pasture on the commons
- COMPT AND RECKONING**, a Scots law process enforcing settlement of accounts
- CONDUCTIO INDEBITI**, a claim for recovering a sum that has been paid when it was not due
- CONSCRIPT FATHERS**, the title given to the senators of ancient Rome
- COOKIE**, a Scotch bun
- COPPER CAPTAIN**, a counterfeit captain. *See* Beaumont and Fletcher's *Rule a Wife and have a Wife*
- CORDERY, MR.**, a name suggested by Corderius, the teacher of Calvin, and author of a book of Latin dialogues once extensively used in schools
- COUPE-GORGE**, cut-throat
- COUTEAU**, a hunting-knife
- CRACKS**, gossip, boasting
- CRIME**, to kidnap
- CRITIC**, a play by Sheridan
- CROOK**, a chain for suspending a pot in old fireplaces
- CROWDY**, a thick pottage made of oatmeal
- CUTTLE**, to diddle, get by cheating
- CUL DE LAMPE**, a pictorial ornament, tailpiece
- CULLION**, a poltroon
- CUMBERNAULD**, the seat of the ancient family of Fleming (Lord Elphinstone), situated 15 miles north-east of Glasgow
- CUMMER**, a gossip or friend
- CUTTY**, short
- DAFFING**, frolicking, larking, fun
- DAFT**, crazy
- DAIS**. *See* Chamber of dais
- DANDILLY**, noted for beauty
- DANG**, drove, knocked
- DEAD-DEAL**, the board on which a dead body is stretched
- DEBITUM FUNDI**, a real burden on the estate
- DECORE**, to decorate; **DECOREMENTS**, decorations
- DÉMÊLÉ**, an encounter, altercation
- DEMI-SAKER**, a light field-piece, small cannon
- DENTIER**, more dainty
- DIET-LOAF**, a sweet cake
- DIGITO MONSTRARI**, to be pointed at with the finger
- DING**, to knock, drive, beat
- DINK**, trim, neat
- DIRGIE**, a funeral entertainment
- DRK**, a dagger
- DISNA**, does not
- DISPONE UPON**, bestowed upon
- DITTAY**, an indictment, accusation
- DOTTED**, dotard, stupid
- DON GAYFEROS**, a nephew of the chivalric Roland, and one of the Twelve Peers of Charlemagne
- DONNART**, stupid
- DOO**, a dove, pigeon
- DOUR**, stubborn
- DRAP-DE-BERRY**, a cloth made at Berri in France
- DREIGH**, slow, lingering
- DRIBBLE**, a drop
- DROUTHY**, dry
- DRUCKEN**, drunk
- DRUMLANRIG**, the ancient seat of the Queensberry family (now belongs to that of Buccleuch), on the Nith, parish of Durisdeer, Dumfriesshire
- DUNDEE**. John Grahame of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, a supporter of the Stuarts
- DUNG**, knocked, driven
- DUNSH**, to nudge
- DWINING**, declining, pining away
- EARTH** (of a badger), a hole
- EAST LOTHIAN**, another name for Haddingtonshire
- EATCHE**, adze
- EEB**, shallow
- ECLAIRCISSEMENT**, explanation
- EE**, an eye; **EEN**, eyes
- EGERIA**, the nymph who used to meet King Numa Pompilius in a grove near Rome
- ELBO'-JIGGER**, a fiddler
- ELFLAND**, fairyland
- ENEUCH**, enough
- EXIES**, hysterics
- EXPIRY OF THE LEGAL**, the expiration of the period in which an estate seized

- by adjudication (*q. v.*) may be redeemed  
**EYAS**, a hawk brought up from the nest
- FACTOR**, a steward  
**FAILZE**, to fail  
**FASH**, to trouble  
**FECKLESS**, feeble, silly  
**FELL**, terrible; a hide, skin  
**FEUAR**, a Scotch lease-holder; FEU-RIGHTS, absolute rights of property, in return for the payment of a trifling sum annually  
**FIDUS ACHATES**, faithful companion  
**FIT**, the foot  
**FLAM, FLAN, or FLAWN**, a kind of custard  
**FLANKARD**, the side of the lower part of the abdomen  
**FLIGHTERING**, transient  
**FLISK**, a caper, whim  
**FLORENTINE**, a kind of pie  
**FLYTE**, to scold, storm in anger  
**Fog**, moss  
**FORBYE**, besides  
**FORDUN, JOHN OF**, an early Scottish chronicler of the 14th century  
**FORESPEAK**, to bewitch, presage evil of  
**FORGATHER**, to come together, meet one another  
**FOU**, a bushel  
**FOUL THIEF**, the devil  
**FOUND**, to go, depend  
**FOY**, an entertainment given by friends to one who is about to leave them for good  
**FRACTIOUS**, rebellious, difficult to deal with  
**FREIT**, an omen  
**FREMD**, strange  
**FROGS**, an ornamental fastening of a coat or mantle, generally a long button and a loop  
**FUGITATION**, a criminal's fleeing from justice—a Scots law term  
**FURNISHES** (DEER'S), presumably droppings; hence track
- GABERLUNZIE**, a beggar, mendicant  
**GAE**, to go  
**GAISLING**, a gosling  
**GALLOWAY**, a Scotch cob, named from the district of Galloway where originally bred  
**GANG**, to go; **GANE**, gone  
**GAR**, to make, oblige
- GATE**, direction, place, way  
**GAUGER**, an exciseman  
**GAUNCH**, a snatch with the open mouth, bite  
**GAWSIE**, plump, jolly  
**GEAR**, property  
**GEIZENED**, leaky, as a barrel kept too long dry  
**GEORGIUS**, a gold George-noble (= 6s. 8d.), time of Henry VIII., St. George being the device on the obverse  
**GIF**, if  
**GINES DE PASSAMONTE**. See *Don Quixote*, pt. ii. chap. xxviii., and pt. i. chap. xxii.
- GIRD**, a hoop  
**GIRN**, to grin  
**GLAZEN**, furnished with glass  
**GLEDGING**, looking askance  
**GLEED**, a spark, flame  
**GLEING**, squinting  
**GLENT**, to whisk, flash  
**GLOWER**, to gaze, stare  
**GOB-BOX**, the mouth  
**GOWD**, gold  
**GOWK**, a fool; a cuckoo  
**GOWRIE CONSPIRACY**, a mysterious attempt to assassinate James VI. of Scotland by Lord Ruthven and his brother, the Earl of Gowrie, in 1600  
**GRAHAME TO WEAR GREEN**. The Marquis of Montrose, a Grahame, was driven to execution in a cart of green alder; fulfilling an old prophecy—'Visa la fin (Montrose's motto), On an ouler (alder) tree green, Shall by many be seen'
- GRAITH**, furniture  
**GRAVAMINOUS**, serious, important  
**GREEN AND BLUE CHARIOTS**. In the reign of Justinian, emperor of the Eastern Empire, the rivalries of the blue and green charioteers, who raced in the circus at Byzantium, developed into political factions powerful enough to seriously disturb the state  
**GREET**, to weep  
**GREYBEARD**, a stone jar for holding ale or liquor  
**GROGRAM**, a coarse textile fabric  
**GRUND-MAIL**, rent for the ground  
**GUDEMAN**, the head of the house, the husband  
**GUDESIRE**, a grandfather  
**GUDEWIFE**, a wife, as head of her house, landlady
- GUIDES**, managers, guiders;  
**GUIDING**, treating, behaving to  
**GUSTING THEIR GAES**, tickling their palates  
**GUY OF WARWICK**, the hero of an Early English romance, one of whose feats was to overcome a famous Dun Cow on Dunsmore Heath, near Warwick
- HACKSTOUN OF RATHILLET**, a fanatical Cameronian, one of the murderers of Archbishop Sharp of St. Andrews in 1679  
**HAGGIS**, a Scotch pudding of minced meat, mixed with oatmeal, suet, onions, etc., boiled in a skin bag  
**HALL AND FEIR**, whole and sound, complete and entire  
**HALE, HAILL**, whole  
**HALF-FOU**, half-bushel  
**HAMILTON**, on the Clyde, Lanarkshire, the principal seat of the ducal family of Hamilton. The wild cattle still roam through the extensive parks  
**HARLED**, dragged  
**HATTED KIT**, a bowl of sour or curdled cream  
**HAUD**, to hold; **HAUD OUT**, to present a firearm  
**HEATHER-COW**, a twig or tuft of heath  
**HEEZY**, a hoist, swing up  
**HEIR OF LINNE**, this old ballad is printed in Percy's *Reliques*  
**HELLICAT**, devil-may-care  
**HELL IS PAVED**, etc., the phrase is due to Dr. Johnson; the idea is common to several writers; cf. George Herbert's *Jacula Prudentium*  
**HENRIETTA MARIA**, queen-consort of Charles I., and daughter of Henry IV. of France  
**HERMIT SAGE OF JOHNSON**, Dr. Johnson's parody on a poem by T. Warton. See Boswell's *Life*, under year 1777  
**HOPE, BARD OF**, Thomas Campbell, author of *Pleasures of Hope*  
**HOUGH**, a thigh, ham  
**HOUSEWIFESKEP**, housewifery  
**HOW**, a hollow  
**HUMLOCK**, a hemlock  
**HYKE A TALBOT**, etc. (p. 90), hunting terms and names borrowed from Dame Juliana Berners's



- Treatise of Hawking, Hunting, etc.* (1486) — *Book of St. Alban's*
- ILKA, each, every  
 ILKA LAND ITS AIN LAUCH, every place its own (law) customs  
 ILL-CLECKIT, ill-hatched  
 ILL-DEEDY GETT, mischievous urchin  
 IN FORO CONTENTIOSO, in the law courts  
 INGAN, an onion  
 INIMICUS AMICISSIMUS, an enemy is (sometimes) the best of friends  
 INLAKE, a breach, loss, death  
 INTER MINORES, between minors  
 IN TERROR, as a warning to others  
 IRISH BRIGADE, a body of troops in the pay of the French King  
 ITH, other
- JACOBUS, a gold coin = 25s., first issued by James I. of England  
 JESS, a leathern strap fixed round a hawk's leg  
 JOE, a sweetheart, darling  
 JOHN CHURCHILL, the great soldier, the Duke of Marlborough of Anne's reign  
 JOHNNY NEW-COME, a new-comer, upstart  
 Jow, a toll
- KAIL, broth; KAIL-YARD, a cabbage garden  
 KAIN, a tribute in kind, as of poultry, eggs, cheese, etc., from tenant to landlord  
 KAISER, the Emperor of Germany  
 KEBBUCK, a cheese  
 KEEKIT, peeped  
 KEEP HER THREAP, keep her resolution  
 KELPIE, a water-spirit  
 KEN, to know  
 KENSPECKLE, conspicuous, easily recognised  
 KIMMER, a gossip, friend  
 KINDLY AID, a contribution in kind payable to the landlord by the tenant  
 KIPPAGE, a rage, dilemma  
 KIPPER, a dried salmon  
 KIST, a chest, coffin  
 KITTLE, to tickle; ticklish  
 KNOWE, a knoll, eminence
- LAMMER, amber  
 LAMMER LAW, one of the Lammermoor hills, 8 miles south of Haddington
- L'AMPHITRION ou L'ON DINE, the man who really pays for the dinner. *See* Plautus, *Amphitruo*  
 LANDWARD, in the country, rural  
 LAKE-WAKE, the watch over a dead body  
 LAUCH, law, customs  
 LAUNDER, to do laundry work  
 LAWING, a bill, reckoning  
 LAW'S SCHEME, a company formed in 1717 by John Law (of Lauriston, near Edinburgh) for developing the resources of Louisiana and the Mississippi valley, which at that time belonged to France  
 LEE, NATHANIEL, dramatist, went insane through drink, wrote *The Rival Queens*; or, *Alexander the Great* (1677), and other plays  
 LEG, CHANGE A. *See* Change a leg  
 LIFT, the sky; to carry off  
 LINKS, sandy flat ground on sea-coast, dunes  
 LIPPEN, to trust  
 LIPPENING WORD, occasional, thoughtless word  
 LITH, a joint  
 LOON, a fellow  
 LOOT, allowed, permitted  
 LOUPEN, leaped  
 LOWE, a flame, fire  
 LUCKIE, mother, a title given to old dames  
 LUITUR CUM PERSONA, etc. (p. 51), he pays with his person who cannot pay with his purse  
 LUM, a chimney  
 L'UM N'EMPÊCHE, etc. (p. 103), the one is no hindrance to the other  
 LUNGIES, loins  
 LURDANE, a blockhead
- MAIL, tax, rent  
 MAILING, a small farm  
 MAIN, a hand at dice, match at cock-fighting  
 MAIR, MAIST, more, most  
 MAÎTRE D'ARMES, swordsmen, fencing-master  
 MALEUS MALIFICARUM (nine editions before 1496), by Krämer and Sprenger, describing the processes against witches  
 MANSE, a parsonage  
 MAUN, must  
 MAUT, malt  
 MEAL-POKE, a meal-bag  
 MELTER, a herring full of milt  
 MEPHIBOSHETH, a char-
- acter in Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*  
 MERK = 1s. 1½d.  
 MERSE, Berwickshire  
 MESSAN, a cur  
 METALL'D (LADS), mettled, full of spirit  
 MILE, SCOTTISH, nearly nine furlongs  
 MILL, or MULL, a snuff-box  
 MIRANDA, the heroine of Shakespeare's *Tempest*  
 MIRK, dark  
 MISGIE, to go wrong, fail  
 MITTENS. *See* Claw up your mittens  
 MON DIEU! IL Y EN A DEUX, Good Heavens! there are two of them  
 MONTERO CAP, a horseman's or huntsman's cap with ear-flaps  
 MORLAND, GEORGE, a clever English painter, but a man of dissipated habits, who died in 1804  
 MOSS, a morass, marsh  
 MOUNTAIN-MAN, a Cameroonian, strictest sect of Covenanters  
 MR. PUFF, a character in Sheridan's *Critic*  
 MUCKLE, much  
 MULL, a snuff-horn  
 MULTIPLEPOINDING, a Scots law process, the English interpleader, for settling competing claims to one and the same fund  
 MURGEONS, mouths, grimaces
- NAE, NAEBODY, NAETHING, no, nobody, nothing  
 NAB, never  
 NEQUE DIVES, NEQUE, etc. (p. 141), No Scotchman of merit, be he rich, brave, or even wise, will be able to remain long in his country. Envy will drive him out  
 NEUK, nook, corner  
 NOMBLES, or NUMBLES, the entrails of a deer  
 NORTHAMPTON, EARL OF. Henry Howard, younger brother of Thomas, fourth Duke of Norfolk, born 1540, was prominent during the reigns of Elizabeth and James I.  
 NORTH BERWICK LAW, a conical hill near North Berwick  
 NOURICESHIP, the office of nurse  
 NOWT, black cattle  
 NUMA, the second of the legendary kings of ancient Rome

- NUPTA; DOMUM DUCTA;**  
**OBIT; SEPULT;** wedded;  
 taken home; died; buried
- OFFCOME**, an apology, excuse
- ORANGE, PRINCE OF.** *See*  
 Spanish generals
- OUT-BYE**, from home
- OVERCROW**, to overpower,  
 triumph over
- OWERLOOK**, to ignore
- OXTER**, the armpit
- PACOLET**, a dwarf, owner of a  
 winged horse, in the legend  
 of *Valentine and Orson*
- PAINTING.** *See* Serene and  
 silent art
- PAND**, a pledge; a bed-  
 curtain
- PAROCHINE**, a parish
- PARVE, NEC INVIDEO,** etc.  
 (p. 2), Thou art about to  
 go, but alone, into the  
 busy city, my little book  
 —I grudge thee not thy  
 lot
- PAS D'AVANCE**, the lead, pre-  
 cedence
- PATRIA POTESTAS**, paternal  
 authority
- PEARLINGS**, lace
- PEAT**, a person of insuffer-  
 able pride
- PEGH**, to pant, breathe hard
- PETTICOAT-TAIL**, a kind of  
 cake baked with butter
- PETTY COVER**, for *petit*  
*couvert*, a meal not eaten  
 in ceremonious state
- PEW**, the plaintive cry of  
 certain birds; **COULDNA**  
**HAE PLAYED PEW**, could  
 not have drawn a note from
- PICKLE**, a small quantity
- PICK-MAW**, a species of gull
- PIG**, a stoneware vessel,  
 pitcher
- PINE**, to pain, punish
- PINNYWINKLES**, an instru-  
 ment of torture consisting  
 of a board with holes, into  
 which the fingers were  
 thrust and pressed with  
 screw-pegs
- PINT, SCOTCH** = 3 English  
 pints
- PIQUE, REPIQUE, AND CAPOT**,  
 terms used in the game of  
 picquet
- PIRN**, a reel
- PIT-MIRK**, as dark as pitch
- PIZE**, a term of mild exe-  
 cration
- PLACEBO**, a sop
- PLACK**, a small copper coin  
 =  $\frac{1}{3}$ d penny
- PLISKIE**, a prank, trick
- FLOY**, a merry-making
- PLUMDAMAS**, for *prune de*  
*damas*, a damask plum,  
*i. e.* a damson (tart)
- POCK-PUDDING**, a Scotchman's  
 contemptuous name for an  
 Englishman
- POINT, QUINT, AND QUATORZE**,  
 terms used in the game of  
 picquet
- POINT D'APPUI**, a support
- POINT D'ESPAGNE**, a sort of  
 French lace esteemed in  
 Spain in the 17th century
- POKE**, a bag
- POSSO**, in *MANNOR WATER*, in  
 Peebleshire
- POUTHERED**, corned, slightly  
 salted
- PRESTER JOHN**, legendary  
 King of Abyssinia
- PRETTY MAN**, a brave man,  
 athletic and skilled in the  
 use of his weapons
- PROPINE**, a gift
- PUND SCOTS** = 1s. 8d. sterling
- PYKE**, pick
- QUAIGH**, a drinking-cup of  
 hooped staves, ornamented  
 with silver. It held about  
 a pint, and was chiefly  
 used for wine and brandy
- QUARTER'S LENGTH**, a quarter  
 of a yard
- QUEAN**, a sprightly young  
 woman, flirt
- RAE**, a roe-deer
- RAILLY, OR RAIL**, a kind of  
 cloak or kerchief for the  
 neck and head
- RAVEN-BONE**, the spoon-bone  
 of the brisket, thrown by  
 hunters to the ravens, in  
 cutting up the stag
- REAVING**, thieving
- REDD**, to clear, tidy
- RED WUD**, downright mad
- REEK**, smoke
- REESTED**, smoke-dried
- REMIGIUS, NICOLAUS**, or  
**NICHOLAS OF REMY**, author  
 of a work on witchcraft  
 (1595)
- REPONED**, used as a reply
- REVERENCE, BACON WITH**,  
 bacon with its garnishings  
 or belongings
- RIFLER**, a hawk that does  
 not return to the lure
- RING-WALK**, the track of a  
 stag
- ROAR YOU AN 'T WERE ANY**  
**NIGHTINGALE.** *See* *Mid-*  
*summer Night's Dream*,  
 Act. i. Sc. 2
- ROUND**, to whisper
- ROUP**, an auction
- RUDAS**, a scolding jade
- RUNLET**, a barrel, holding  
 18 $\frac{1}{2}$  gallons
- SAE**, so
- ST. CLAIR TO CROSS THE ORD**  
**ON A MONDAY.** The Earl  
 of Orkney, chief of the  
 Sinclairs or St. Clairs, led  
 his men on a Monday over  
 Ord Hill on the way to  
 Flodden, where they all  
 perished to a man
- SAINT GERMAINS**, near Paris,  
 where James II. held court  
 during his exile
- ST. MARGARET**, niece of  
 Edward the Confessor and  
 wife of Malcolm Canmore;  
 her day is June 10th
- SAIR**, sore
- SAMYN**, same
- SANT**, a saint
- SARABAND**, a Spanish dance
- SARK**, a shirt
- SAUL**, soul
- SAUMON**, a salmon
- SAUT**, salt
- SCART**, a scratch
- SCAUD**, to scald
- SCLATE**, a slate; **SCLATER**, a  
 slater
- SCOTCH PINT** = 3 English pints
- SCOTTISH MILE**, nearly nine  
 furlongs
- SCRAUGH**, a screech, loud,  
 discordant cry
- SCREIGH**, to shriek, scream
- SCUNNER**, to loathe, shudder  
 with aversion
- SERENE AND SILENT ART**  
 (painting). *See* Camp-  
 bell's *Stanzas to Painting*
- SETS**, becomes, suits
- SEVEN SLEEPERS**, martyrs of  
 Ephesus, who, according  
 to the legend, slept in a  
 cave from the reign of the  
 Emperor Decius to that of  
 Theodosius II., a period  
 of 196 years
- SEVEN WISE MASTERS**, the  
 seven sages of ancient  
 Greece
- SHAUGHLE**, to wear down,  
 shuffle
- SHINS TO PINE** (punish), *e. g.*  
 the torture of the boot
- SHOT OF, TO BE**, to get quit of
- SHOVEL-BOARD**, a game in  
 which the players strive to  
 shove or drive coins or  
 counters on to certain  
 marks, lines, or squares on  
 the table
- SIC, SICCAN**, such
- SINGLES**, the talons of a hawk
- SIR EVAN DHU**, Sir Evan  
 Cameron of Lochiel, a  
 famous Highland chief

and supporter of the Stuarts, fought at Killiecrankie in 1689

SIR JOSHUA, *i. e.* Sir Joshua Reynolds, the painter

SKIOCH DOCH NA SKIALL, cut a drink with a tale, *i. e.* Don't preach over your liquor

SKIRL, to scream

SLIDDERY, slippery

SLOKEN, to slake, quench

SNAP, a small gingerbread

SNECKDRAWING, cunning;

SNECKDRAWER, an artful, cunning person

SNISHING, SNEESHIN, SNEESHING, snuff

SOOPIT, swept

SOOTHFAST, trusty, honest

SOPITE, to settle, set at rest

SORT, to supply, suit; to give a drubbing

SOUGH, a rumour, whisper;

SOUGHED, softly breathed, whispered

SOUP, a sup; mouthful

SOUPLE, a cudgel

SOWENS, a kind of gruel made from the soured siftings of oatmeal

SPAE, to foretell

SPANISH GENERALS AND PRINCE OF ORANGE. William of Orange commanded 20,000 Spaniards in the campaign against France, 1554-57

SPEER, to ask, invite, inquire

SPRENGERUS. Jacob Sprenger, joint author of *Mal-leus Mulficarum*

SPULE-BANE, the shoulder-blade

SPUNK, a spark, match

SPURS, DISH OF. Scott's ancestress, the Flower of Yarrow, is said to have reminded her lord, Auld Wat of Harden, a celebrated Border raider, that the larder was empty, by placing on the table a dish containing a pair of clean spurs—a hint to ride into England. See Lockhart's *Life*, vol. i. p. 93

STEADING, a farm, farm-yard

STEER, to disturb

STICKIT, imperfect, broken down

STOUP, a liquid measure

STOUTHRIEF, robbery with violence

STRAE, straw

STRAUGHT, to stretch, make straight

STREIK, to stretch, lay out

SUB JOVE FRIGIDO, in the open air

SUBURB, outlying (district, place)

SUMPH, a blockhead, dunce

SUNE, soon

SURBATED, foot-sore

SUUM CUIQUE TRIBUITO, give to each his own

SWANKING, active, agile

SWAP, a barter, exchange; to strike soundly

SWAUK, a swack, thwack, violent blow

SWIRE, a mountain pass

SYBO, a young onion

SYCORAX, a witch, the mother of Caliban, in Shakespeare's *Tempest*

SYND, to rinse

SYNE, since, ago

TACK, a lease, possession

TAID, a toad

TAIT, a bunch, handful

TAKE ONE'S GAIT, to go one's own way

TAP OF TOW, bunch of tow on the distaff, that readily catches fire

TASS, a glass

TAURIDOR, a bull-fighter

TEIND, a tithe

TENONY, stringy, sinewy

TEUGH, tough

THICKSET, a kind of fustian, resembling velvet in appearance

THOMAS THE RHYMER, of Ercildoune (Earlston) in Berwickshire, an ancient Scottish poet and prophet, and a favourite legendary hero

'THOU SWEETEST THING,' etc. (p. 191), from Joanna Baillie's *Constantine Palæologus*, Act ii. Sc. 2

THOWLESS, inactive, remiss

THRAW, to twist itself, distort itself; a twist

THREEP, KEEP HER. See Keep her threep

THROUGH-STANE, THRUCH-STANE, a flat gravestone

TIMMER, timber; TIMMER BURSE, the exchange of the timber-merchants

TIPPENCE, twopence

TOCHER-GOOD, dowry

TOD, a fox

TOD'S DEN, also called in other passages Tod's Hole, and stated to be 5 to 6 miles from Wolf's Crag<sup>1</sup>

TOKAY, a fiery Hungarian wine

TOLBOOTH, a gaol

TONGUE OF THE TRUMP, the part of a jew's-harp that makes the sound; hence the essential or principal person concerned

TOUT, the pet; a fit of ill-temper

TRAPRAIN, or TRAPRAIN LAW, a conspicuous conical hill 4 miles east of Haddington

TREDRILLE, a game of cards played by three persons

TRISTREM, SIR, a knight of the Round Table, famous in the chase

TWA, two

TWAL, twelve; TWAL PENNIES SCOTCH—one penny of English money

TWILT, a quilted bed-cover

UMQUHLE, deceased, late

UNA, the heroine of Spenser's *Færie Queene*

UNCO, uncommon

VAIK, to be vacant

VERSAILES, the court of Louis XIV. of France

VIA FACTI, by force

VIRGINALS, an old sort of piano

VISIE, an inspection

VISNOMY, physiognomy, face, features

VIVERS, victuals

WADSET, a mortgage, pledge;

WADSETTER, a usurer, mortgager

WAE, woe; woeful, sorry

WAME, belly

WAP, a smart stroke

WARE, to spend, bestow

WARLOCK, a witch

WASTLAND, west country

WAT, to wet

WATER-PURPIE, the brook lime or horsewell grass

WAUR, worse

WEAN, an infant, small child

WEID, a feverish cold

WHAMPLE, a blow

WHEEN, a few

WHIGMALEERIES, fancy toys

WHILES, now and again

WHIM-WHAM, fancy pastry

WHIN-BUSH, a furze bush

WHINSTANE, greenstone, ragstone

WHITE-HASS, a meat pudding

<sup>1</sup> A few other irregularities of a similar kind occur in this novel: as Lady Ashton is called Margaret and Eleanor; Ginder, John and Gibbie; the sexton, Morthaugh and Morthuech.

WHOMLING, turning upside down	WIN, to make way, get	WUD, mad
WULL A WINS, woe's me, well-a-day	WIND HIM A FIRN, to cause him trouble, annoyance	WYTE, blame, responsi- bility
WILL TO CUPAR MAUN TO CUPAR, a wilful man must have his way	WITHIE, the gallows, a halter	YESTREEN, yesternight
	WON INTO, made way into	YILL, ale
	WOODIE, the gallows	YOWL, to yell, give tongue

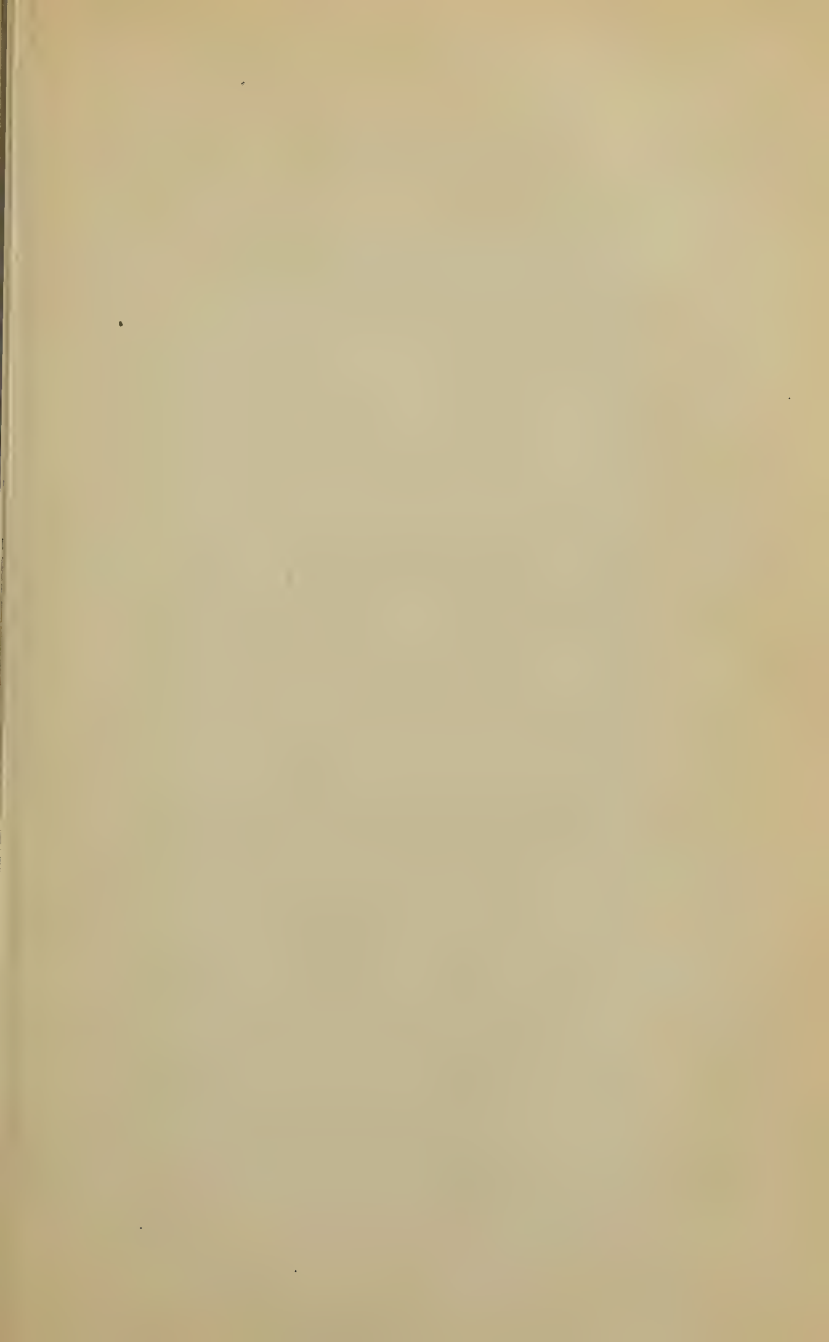
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BLONDEL'S VOICE THRILLED ON EVERY EAR.

# THE TALISMAN





## INTRODUCTION TO THE TALISMAN

**T**HE *Betrothed* did not greatly please one or two friends, who thought that it did not well correspond to the general title of *The Crusaders*. They urged, therefore, that, without direct allusion to the manners of the Eastern tribes, and to the romantic conflicts of the period, the title of a *Tale of the Crusaders* would resemble the playbill which is said to have announced the tragedy of Hamlet, the character of the Prince of Denmark being left out. On the other hand, I felt the difficulty of giving a vivid picture of a part of the world with which I was almost totally unacquainted, unless by early recollections of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*; and not only did I labour under the incapacity of ignorance, in which, as far as regards Eastern manners, I was as thickly wrapped as an Egyptian in his fog; but my contemporaries were, many of them, as much enlightened upon the subject as if they had been inhabitants of the favoured land of Goshen. The love of travelling had pervaded all ranks, and carried the subject of Britain into all quarters of the world. Greece, so attractive by its remains of art, by its struggles for freedom against a Mohammedan tyrant, by its very name, where every fountain had its classical legend — Palestine, endeared to the imagination by yet more sacred remembrances, had been of late surveyed by British eyes, and described by recent travellers. Had I, therefore, attempted the difficult task of substituting manners of my own invention, instead of the genuine costume of the East, almost every traveller I met, who had extended his route beyond what was anciently called 'the grand tour,' had acquired a right, by ocular inspection, to chastise me for my presumption. Every member of the Travellers' Club, who could pretend to have thrown his shoe over Edom, was, by having done so, constituted my lawful critic and corrector. It occurred, therefore, that, where the author of *Anastasius*, as well as he of *Hadji Baba*,

had described the manners and vices of the Eastern nations, not only with fidelity, but with the humour of Le Sage and the ludicrous power of Fielding himself, one who was a perfect stranger to the subject must necessarily produce an unfavourable contrast. The Poet Laureate also, in the charming tale of *Thalaba*, had shown how extensive might be the researches of a person of acquirements and talent, by dint of investigation alone, into the ancient doctrines, history, and manners of the Eastern countries, in which we are probably to look for the cradle of mankind; Moore, in his *Lalla Rookh*, had successfully trod the same path; in which, too, Byron, joining ocular experience to extensive reading, had written some of his most attractive poems. In a word, the Eastern themes had been already so successfully handled by those who were acknowledged to be masters of their craft, that I was diffident of making the attempt.

These were powerful objections, nor did they lose force when they became the subject of anxious reflection, although they did not finally prevail. The arguments on the other side were, that though I had no hope of rivalling the contemporaries whom I have mentioned, yet it occurred to me as possible to acquit myself of the task I was engaged in without entering into competition with them.

The period relating more immediately to the Crusades which I at last fixed upon was that at which the warlike character of Richard I., wild and generous, a pattern of chivalry, with all its extravagant virtues and its no less absurd errors, was opposed to that of Saladin, in which the Christian and English monarch showed all the cruelty and violence of an Eastern sultan, and Saladin, on the other hand, displayed the deep policy and prudence of a European sovereign, whilst each contended which should excel the other in the knightly qualities of bravery and generosity. This singular contrast afforded, as the Author conceived, materials for a work of fiction possessing peculiar interest. One of the inferior characters introduced was a supposed relation of Richard Cœur-de-Lion — a violation of the truth of history which gave offence to Mr. Mills, the author of the *History of Chivalry and the Crusades*, who was not, it may be presumed, aware that romantic fiction naturally includes the power of such invention, which is indeed one of the requisites of the art.

Prince David of Scotland, who was actually in the host, and was the hero of some very romantic adventures on his way

home, was also pressed into my service, and constitutes one of my *dramatis personæ*.

It is true I had already brought upon the field him of the Lion Heart. But it was in a more private capacity than he was here to be exhibited in *The Talisman*: then as a disguised knight, now in the avowed character of a conquering monarch; so that I doubted not a name so dear to Englishmen as that of King Richard I. might contribute to their amusement for more than once.<sup>1</sup>

I had access to all which antiquity believed, whether of reality or fable, on the subject of that magnificent warrior, who was the proudest boast of Europe and their chivalry, and with whose dreadful name the Saracens, according to a historian of their own country, were wont to rebuke their startled horses. 'Do you think,' said they, 'that King Richard is on the track, that you spring so wildly from it?' The most curious register of the history of King Richard is an ancient romance, translated originally from the Norman, and at first certainly having a pretence to be termed a work of chivalry, but latterly becoming stuffed with the most astonishing and monstrous fables. There is perhaps no metrical romance upon record where, along with curious and genuine history, are mingled more absurd and exaggerated incidents. We have placed in the Appendix the passage of the romance in which Richard figures as an ogre, or literal cannibal.

A principal incident in the story is that from which the title is derived. Of all people who ever lived, the Persians were perhaps most remarkable for their unshaken credulity in amulets, spells, periapts, and similar charms, framed, it was said, under the influence of particular planets, and bestowing high medical powers, as well as the means of advancing men's fortunes in various manners. A story of this kind, relating to a crusader of eminence, is often told in the west of Scotland, and the relic alluded to is still in existence, and even yet held in veneration.

Sir Simon Lockhart of Lee and Cartland made a considerable figure in the reigns of Robert the Bruce and of his son David. He was one of the chief of that band of Scottish chivalry who accompanied James, the Good Lord Douglas, on his expedition to the Holy Land, with the heart of King Robert Bruce. Douglas, impatient to get at the Saracens, entered into war with those of Spain, and was killed there. Lockhart proceeded to the Holy Land with such Scottish knights as had escaped the

<sup>1</sup> [See Lockhart, *Life of Scott*, vol. vii. p. 386.]

fate of their leader, and assisted for some time in the wars against the Saracens.

The following adventure is said by tradition to have befallen him. He made prisoner in battle an emir of considerable wealth and consequence. The aged mother of the captive came to the Christian camp, to redeem her son from his state of captivity. Lockhart is said to have fixed the price at which his prisoner should ransom himself; and the lady, pulling out a large embroidered purse, proceeded to tell down the ransom, like a mother who pays little respect to gold in comparison of her son's liberty. In this operation, a pebble inserted in a coin, some say of the Lower Empire, fell out of the purse, and the Saracen matron testified so much haste to recover it as gave the Scottish knight a high idea of its value, when compared with gold or silver. 'I will not consent,' he said, 'to grant your son's liberty, unless that amulet be added to his ransom.' The lady not only consented to this, but explained to Sir Simon Lockhart the mode in which the talisman was to be used, and the uses to which it might be put. The water in which it was dipt operated as a styptic, as a febrifuge, and possessed several other properties as a medical talisman.

Sir Simon Lockhart, after much experience of the wonders which it wrought, brought it to his own country, and left it to his heirs, by whom, and by Clydesdale in general, it was, and is still distinguished by the name of the Lee Penny,<sup>1</sup> from the name of his native seat of Lee.

The most remarkable part of its history, perhaps, was, that it so especially escaped condemnation when the Church of Scotland chose to impeach many other cures which savoured of the miraculous, as occasioned by sorcery, and censured the appeal to them, 'excepting only that to the amulet called the Lee Penny, to which it had pleased God to annex certain healing virtues which the Church did not presume to condemn.' It still, as has been said, exists, and its powers are sometimes resorted to. Of late they have been chiefly restricted to the cure of persons bitten by mad dogs; and as the illness in such cases frequently arises from imagination, there can be no reason for doubting that water which has been poured on the Lee Penny furnishes a congenial cure.

Such is the tradition concerning the talisman, which the Author has taken the liberty to vary in applying it to his own purposes.

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<sup>1</sup> See Note 1.



Considerable liberties have also been taken with the truth of history, both with respect to Conrade of Montserrat's life as well as his death. That Conrade, however, was reckoned the enemy of Richard is agreed both in history and romance. The general opinion of the terms upon which they stood may be guessed from the proposal of the Saracens, that the Marquis of Montserrat should be invested with certain parts of Syria, which they were to yield to the Christians. Richard, according to the romance which bears his name, 'could no longer repress his fury. "The Marquis," he said, "was a traitor, who had robbed the Knights Hospitallers of sixty thousand pounds, the present of his father Henry; that he was a renegade, whose treachery had occasioned the loss of Acre"; and he concluded by a solemn oath, that he would cause him to be drawn to pieces by wild horses, if he should ever venture to pollute the Christian camp by his presence. Philip attempted to intercede in favour of the Marquis, and throwing down his glove, offered to become a pledge for his fidelity to the Christians; but his offer was rejected, and he was obliged to give way to Richard's impetuosity.'—[Ellis, *Specimens of Early English Metrical Romances*, 1805, vol. ii. p. 230.]

Conrade of Montserrat makes a considerable figure in those wars, and was at length put to death by one of the followers of the Scheik, or Old Man of the Mountain; nor did Richard remain free of the suspicion of having instigated his death.

It may be said, in general, that most of the incidents introduced in the following tale are fictitious; and that reality, where it exists, is only retained in the characters of the piece.

1st July 1832.



# THE TALISMAN

## CHAPTER I

They, too, retired  
To the wilderness, but 't was with arms.

*Paradise Regained.*

THE burning sun of Syria had not yet attained its highest point in the horizon, when a knight of the Red Cross, who had left his distant northern home and joined the host of the Crusaders in Palestine, was pacing slowly along the sandy deserts which lie in the vicinity of the Dead Sea, or, as it is called, the Lake Asphaltites, where the waves of the Jordan pour themselves into an inland sea, from which there is no discharge of waters.

The warlike pilgrim had toiled among cliffs and precipices during the earlier part of the morning; more lately, issuing from those rocky and dangerous defiles, he had entered upon that great plain, where the accursed cities provoked, in ancient days, the direct and dreadful vengeance of the Omnipotent.

The toil, the thirst, the dangers of the way were forgotten, as the traveller recalled the fearful catastrophe which had converted into an arid and dismal wilderness the fair and fertile valley of Siddim, once well watered, even as the garden of the Lord, now a parched and blighted waste, condemned to eternal sterility.

Crossing himself as he viewed the dark mass of rolling waters, in colour as in quality unlike those of every other lake, the traveller shuddered as he remembered that beneath these sluggish waves lay the once proud cities of the plain, whose grave was dug by the thunder of the heavens, or the eruption of subterraneous fire, and whose remains were hid, even by that sea which holds no living fish in its bosom, bears no skiff

on its surface, and, as if its own dreadful bed were the only fit receptacle for its sullen waters, sends not, like other lakes, a tribute to the ocean. 'The whole land around, as in the days of Moses, was 'brimstone and salt; it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth thereon'; the land as well as the lake might be termed dead, as producing nothing having resemblance to vegetation; and even the very air was entirely devoid of its ordinary winged inhabitants, deterred probably by the odour of bitumen and sulphur, which the burning sun exhaled from the waters of the lake in steaming clouds, frequently assuming the appearance of waterspouts. Masses of the slimy and sulphureous substance called naphtha, which floated idly on the sluggish and sullen waves, supplied those rolling clouds with new vapours, and afforded awful testimony to the truth of the Mosaic history.

Upon this scene of desolation the sun shone with almost intolerable splendour, and all living nature seemed to have hidden itself from the rays, excepting the solitary figure which moved through the flitting sand at a foot's pace, and appeared the sole breathing thing on the wide surface of the plain. The dress of the rider and the accoutrements of his horse were peculiarly unfit for the traveller in such a country. A coat of linked mail, with long sleeves, plated gauntlets, and a steel breastplate, had not been esteemed a sufficient weight of armour: there was also his triangular shield suspended round his neck, and his barred helmet of steel, over which he had a hood and collar of mail, which was drawn around the warrior's shoulders and throat, and filled up the vacancy between the hauberk and the head-piece. His lower limbs were sheathed, like his body, in flexible mail, securing the legs and thighs, while the feet rested in plated shoes, which corresponded with the gauntlets. A long, broad, straight-shaped, double-edged falchion, with a handle formed like a cross, corresponded with a stout poniard on the other side. The knight also bore, secured to his saddle, with one end resting on his stirrup, the long steel-headed lance, his own proper weapon, which, as he rode, projected backwards, and displayed its little pennoncelle, to dally with the faint breeze, or drop in the dead calm. To this cumbrous equipment must be added a surcoat of embroidered cloth, much frayed and worn, which was thus far useful, that it excluded the burning rays of the sun from the armour, which they would otherwise have rendered intolerable to the wearer. The surcoat bore, in several places, the arms of the owner,

although much defaced. These seemed to be a couchant leopard, with the motto, 'I sleep — wake me not.' An outline of the same device might be traced on his shield, though many a blow had almost effaced the painting. The flat top of his cumbrous cylindrical helmet was unadorned with any crest. In retaining their own unwieldy defensive armour, the northern Crusaders seemed to set at defiance the nature of the climate and country to which they had come to war.

The accoutrements of the horse were scarcely less massive and unwieldy than those of the rider. The animal had a heavy saddle plated with steel, uniting in front with a species of breast-plate, and behind with defensive armour made to cover the loins. Then there was a steel axe, or hammer, called a mace-of-arms, and which hung to the saddle-bow; the reins were secured by chain-work, and the front-stall of the bridle was a steel plate, with apertures for the eyes and nostrils, having in the midst a short, sharp pike, projecting from the forehead of the horse like the horn of the fabulous unicorn.

But habit had made the endurance of this load of panoply a second nature both to the knight and his gallant charger. Numbers, indeed, of the Western warriors who hurried to Palestine died ere they became inured to the burning climate; but there were others to whom that climate became innocent and even friendly, and among this fortunate number was the solitary horseman who now traversed the border of the Dead Sea.

Nature, which cast his limbs in a mould of uncommon strength, fitted to wear his linked hauberk with as much ease as if the meshes had been formed of cobwebs, had endowed him with a constitution as strong as his limbs, and which bade defiance to almost all changes of climate, as well as to fatigue and privations of every kind. His disposition seemed, in some degree, to partake of the qualities of his bodily frame; and as the one possessed great strength and endurance, united with the power of violent exertion, the other, under a calm and undisturbed semblance, had much of the fiery and enthusiastic love of glory which constituted the principal attribute of the renowned Norman line, and had rendered them sovereigns in every corner of Europe where they had drawn their adventurous swords.

It was not, however, to all the race that fortune proposed such tempting rewards; and those obtained by the solitary knight during two years' campaign in Palestine had been only temporal fame, and, as he was taught to believe, spiritual privileges. Meantime, his slender stock of money had melted



away, the rather that he did not pursue any of the ordinary modes by which the followers of the Crusade condescended to recruit their diminished resources at the expense of the people of Palestine : he exacted no gifts from the wretched natives for sparing their possessions when engaged in warfare with the Saracens, and he had not availed himself of any opportunity of enriching himself by the ransom of prisoners of consequence. The small train which had followed him from his native country had been gradually diminished, as the means of maintaining them disappeared, and his only remaining squire was at present on a sick-bed, and unable to attend his master, who travelled, as we have seen, singly and alone. This was of little consequence to the Crusader, who was accustomed to consider his good sword as his safest escort, and devout thoughts as his best companion.

Nature had, however, her demands for refreshment and repose, even on the iron frame and patient disposition of the Knight of the Sleeping Leopard ; and at noon, when the Dead Sea lay at some distance on his right, he joyfully hailed the sight of two or three palm-trees, which arose beside the well which was assigned for his mid-day station. His good horse, too, which had plodded forward with the steady endurance of his master, now lifted his head, expanded his nostrils, and quickened his pace, as if he snuffed afar off the living waters, which marked the place of repose and refreshment. But labour and danger were doomed to intervene ere the horse or horseman reached the desired spot.

As the Knight of the Couchant Leopard continued to fix his eyes attentively on the yet distant cluster of palm-trees, it seemed to him as if some object was moving among them. The distant form separated itself from the trees, which partly hid its motions, and advanced towards the knight with a speed which soon showed a mounted horseman, whom his turban, long spear, and green caftan floating in the wind, on his nearer approach, showed to be a Saracen cavalier. 'In the desert,' saith an Eastern proverb, 'no man meets a friend.' The Crusader was totally indifferent whether the infidel, who now approached on his gallant barb, as if borne on the wings of an eagle, came as friend or foe ; perhaps, as a vowed champion of the Cross, he might rather have preferred the latter. He disengaged his lance from his saddle, seized it with the right hand, placed it in rest with its point half elevated, gathered up the reins in the left, waked his horse's mettle with the spur, and prepared

to encounter the stranger with the calm self-confidence belonging to the victor in many contests.

The Saracen came on at the speedy gallop of an Arab horseman, managing his steed more by his limbs and the inflection of his body than by any use of the reins, which hung loose in his left hand ; so that he was enabled to wield the light round buckler of the skin of the rhinoceros, ornamented with silver loops, which he wore on his arm, swinging it as if he meant to oppose its slender circle to the formidable thrust of the Western lance. His own long spear was not couched or levelled like that of his antagonist, but grasped by the middle with his right hand, and brandished at arm's length above his head. As the cavalier approached his enemy at full career, he seemed to expect that the Knight of the Leopard should put his horse to the gallop to encounter him. But the Christian knight, well acquainted with the customs of Eastern warriors, did not mean to exhaust his good horse by any unnecessary exertion ; and, on the contrary, made a dead halt, confident that, if the enemy advanced to the actual shock, his own weight, and that of his powerful charger, would give him sufficient advantage, without the additional momentum of rapid motion. Equally sensible and apprehensive of such a probable result, the Saracen cavalier, when he had approached towards the Christian within twice the length of his lance, wheeled his steed to the left with inimitable dexterity, and rode twice around his antagonist, who, turning without quitting his ground, and presenting his front constantly to his enemy, frustrated his attempts to attack him on an unguarded point ; so that the Saracen, wheeling his horse, was fain to retreat to the distance of an hundred yards. A second time, like a hawk attacking a heron, the Heathen renewed the charge, and a second time was fain to retreat without coming to a close struggle. A third time he approached in the same manner, when the Christian knight, desirous to terminate this illusory warfare, in which he might at length have been worn out by the activity of his foeman, suddenly seized the mace which hung at his saddle-bow, and, with a strong hand and unerring aim, hurled it against the head of the Emir, for such and not less his enemy appeared. The Saracen was just aware of the formidable missile in time to interpose his light buckler betwixt the mace and his head ; but the violence of the blow forced the buckler down on his turban, and though that defence also contributed to deaden its violence, the Saracen was beaten from his horse. Ere the Christian could avail himself

of this mishap, his nimble foeman sprung from the ground, and, calling on his steed, which instantly returned to his side, he leaped into his seat without touching the stirrup, and regained all the advantage of which the Knight of the Leopard hoped to deprive him. But the latter had in the meanwhile recovered his mace, and the Eastern cavalier, who remembered the strength and dexterity with which his antagonist had aimed it, seemed to keep cautiously out of reach of that weapon, of which he had so lately felt the force, while he showed his purpose of waging a distant warfare with missile weapons of his own. Planting his long spear in the sand at a distance from the scene of combat, he strung, with great address, a short bow, which he carried at his back, and putting his horse to the gallop, once more described two or three circles of a wider extent than formerly, in the course of which he discharged six arrows at the Christian with such unerring skill that the goodness of his harness alone saved him from being wounded in as many places. The seventh shaft apparently found a less perfect part of the armour, and the Christian dropped heavily from his horse. But what was the surprise of the Saracen, when, dismounting to examine the condition of his prostrate enemy, he found himself suddenly within the grasp of the European, who had had recourse to this artifice to bring his enemy within his reach! Even in this deadly grapple the Saracen was saved by his agility and presence of mind. He unloosed the sword-belt, in which the Knight of the Leopard had fixed his hold, and, thus eluding his fatal grasp, mounted his horse, which seemed to watch his motions with the intelligence of a human being, and again rode off. But in the last encounter the Saracen had lost his sword and his quiver of arrows, both of which were attached to the girdle, which he was obliged to abandon. He had also lost his turban in the struggle. These disadvantages seemed to incline the Moslem to a truce: he approached the Christian with his right hand extended, but no longer in a menacing attitude.

‘There is truce betwixt our nations,’ he said, in the *lingua franca* commonly used for the purpose of communication with the Crusaders; ‘wherefore should there be war betwixt thee and me? Let there be peace betwixt us.’

‘I am well contented,’ answered he of the Couchant Leopard; ‘but what security dost thou offer that thou wilt observe the truce?’

‘The word of a follower of the Prophet was never broken,’

answered the Emir. 'It is thou, brave Nazarene, from whom I should demand security, did I not know that treason seldom dwells with courage.'

The Crusader felt that the confidence of the Moslem made him ashamed of his own doubts.

'By the cross of my sword,' he said, laying his hand on the weapon as he spoke, 'I will be true companion to thee, Saracen, while our fortune wills that we remain in company together.'

'By Mahommed, Prophet of God, and by Allah, God of the Prophet,' replied his late foeman, 'there is not treachery in my heart towards thee. And now wend we to yonder fountain, for the hour of rest is at hand, and the stream had hardly touched my lip when I was called to battle by thy approach.'

The Knight of the Couchant Leopard yielded a ready and courteous assent; and the late foes, without an angry look or gesture of doubt, rode side by side to the little cluster of palm-trees.

## CHAPTER II

**T**IMES of danger have always, and in a peculiar degree, their seasons of good-will and of security ; and this was particularly so in the ancient feudal ages, in which, as the manners of the period had assigned war to be the chief and most worthy occupation of mankind, the intervals of peace, or rather of truce, were highly relished by those warriors to whom they were seldom granted, and endeared by the very circumstances which rendered them transitory. It is not worth while preserving any permanent enmity against a foe whom a champion has fought with to-day, and may again stand in bloody opposition to on the next morning. The time and situation afforded so much room for the ebullition of violent passions, that men, unless when peculiarly opposed to each other, or provoked by the recollection of private and individual wrongs, cheerfully enjoyed in each other's society the brief intervals of pacific intercourse which a warlike life admitted.

The distinction of religions, nay, the fanatical zeal which animated the followers of the Cross and of the Crescent against each other, was much softened by a feeling so natural to generous combatants, and especially cherished by the spirit of chivalry. This last strong impulse had extended itself gradually from the Christians to their mortal enemies the Saracens, both of Spain and of Palestine. The latter were indeed no longer the fanatical savages who had burst from the centre of Arabian deserts, with the sabre in one hand and the Koran in the other, to inflict death or the faith of Mahommed, or, at the best, slavery and tribute, upon all who dared to oppose the belief of the prophet of Mecca. These alternatives indeed had been offered to the unwarlike Greeks and Syrians ; but in contending with the western Christians, animated by a zeal as fiery as their own, and possessed of as unconquerable courage, address, and success in arms, the Saracens gradually caught a part of their manners, and especially of those chivalrous



observances which were so well calculated to charm the minds of a proud and conquering people. They had their tournaments and games of chivalry ; they had even their knights, or some rank analogous ; and, above all, the Saracens observed their plighted faith with an accuracy which might sometimes put to shame those who owned a better religion. Their truces, whether national or betwixt individuals, were faithfully observed ; and thus it was that war, in itself perhaps the greatest of evils, yet gave occasion for display of good faith, generosity, clemency, and even kindly affections, which less frequently occur in more tranquil periods, where the passions of men, experiencing wrongs or entertaining quarrels which cannot be brought to instant decision, are apt to smoulder for a length of time in the bosoms of those who are so unhappy as to be their prey.

It was under the influence of these milder feelings, which soften the horrors of warfare, that the Christian and Saracen, who had so lately done their best for each other's mutual destruction, rode at a slow pace towards the fountain of palm-trees, to which the Knight of the Couchant Leopard had been tending, when interrupted in mid-passage by his fleet and dangerous adversary. Each was wrapt for some time in his own reflections, and took breath after an encounter which had threatened to be fatal to one or both ; and their good horses seemed no less to enjoy the interval of repose. That of the Saracen, however, though he had been forced into much the more violent and extended sphere of motion, appeared to have suffered less from fatigue than the charger of the European knight. The sweat hung still clammy on the limbs of the last, when those of the noble Arab were completely dried by the interval of tranquil exercise, all saving the foam-flakes which were still visible on his bridle and housings. The loose soil on which he trode so much augmented the distress of the Christian's horse, heavily loaded by his own armour and the weight of his rider, that the latter jumped from his saddle, and led his charger along the deep dust of the loamy soil, which was burnt in the sun into a substance more impalpable than the finest sand, and thus gave the faithful horse refreshment at the expense of his own additional toil ; for, iron-sheathed as he was, he sunk over the mailed shoes at every step which he placed on a surface so light and unresisting.

'You are right,' said the Saracen, and it was the first word that either had spoken since their truce was concluded — 'your strong horse deserves your care ; but what do you in the

desert with an animal which sinks over the fetlock at every step, as if he would plant each foot deep as the root of a date-tree ?'

'Thou speakest rightly, Saracen,' said the Christian knight, not delighted at the tone with which the infidel criticised his favourite steed — 'rightly, according to thy knowledge and observation. But my good horse hath ere now borne me, in mine own land, over as wide a lake as thou seest yonder spread out behind us, yet not wet one hair above his hoof.'

The Saracen looked at him with as much surprise as his manners permitted him to testify, which was only expressed by a slight approach to a disdainful smile, that hardly curled perceptibly the broad thick mustachio which enveloped his upper lip.

'It is justly spoken,' he said, instantly composing himself to his usual serene gravity : 'list to a Frank, and hear a fable.'

'Thou art not courteous, misbeliever,' replied the Crusader, 'to doubt the word of a dubbed knight ; and were it not that thou speakest in ignorance, and not in malice, our truce had its ending ere it is well begun. Thinkest thou I tell thee an untruth when I say that I, one of five hundred horsemen, armed in complete mail, have ridden — ay, and ridden for miles, upon water as solid as the crystal and ten times less brittle ?'

'What wouldst thou tell me ?' answered the Moslem. 'Yonder inland sea thou dost point at is peculiar in this, that, by the especial curse of God, it suffereth nothing to sink in its waves, but wafts them away, and casts them on its margin ; but neither the Dead Sea nor any of the seven oceans which environ the earth will endure on their surface the pressure of a horse's foot, more than the Red Sea endured to sustain the advance of Pharaoh and his host.'

'You speak truth after your knowledge, Saracen,' said the Christian knight ; 'and yet, trust me, I fable not, according to mine. Heat in this climate converts the soil into something almost as unstable as water ; and in my land cold often converts the water itself into a substance as hard as rock. Let us speak of this no longer ; for the thoughts of the calm, clear, blue refulgence of a winter's lake, glimmering to stars and moonbeam, aggravate the horrors of this fiery desert, where, methinks, the very air which we breathe is like the vapour of a fiery furnace seven times heated.'

The Saracen looked on him with some attention, as if to discover in what sense he was to understand words which to him

must have appeared either to contain something of mystery or of imposition. At length he seemed determined in what manner to receive the language of his new companion.

'You are,' he said, 'of a nation that loves to laugh, and you make sport with yourselves and with others by telling what is impossible, and reporting what never chanced. Thou art one of the knights of France, who hold it for glee and pastime to "gab,"<sup>1</sup> as they term it, of exploits that are beyond human power. I were wrong to challenge, for the time, the privilege of thy speech, since boasting is more natural to thee than truth.'

'I am not of their land, neither of their fashion,' said the knight, 'which is, as thou well sayest, to "gab" of that which they dare not undertake, or undertaking cannot perfect. But in this I have imitated their folly, brave Saracen, that, in talking to thee of what thou canst not comprehend, I have, even in speaking most simple truth, fully incurred the character of a braggart in thy eyes; so, I pray you, let my words pass.'

They had now arrived at the knot of palm-trees, and the fountain which welled out from beneath their shade in sparkling profusion.

We have spoken of a moment of truce in the midst of war; and this, a spot of beauty in the midst of a sterile desert, was scarce less dear to the imagination. It was a scene which, perhaps, would elsewhere have deserved little notice; but as the single speck, in a boundless horizon, which promised the refreshment of shade and living water, these blessings, held cheap where they are common, rendered the fountain and its neighbourhood a little paradise. Some generous or charitable hand, ere yet the evil days of Palestine began, had walled in and arched over the fountain, to preserve it from being absorbed in the earth, or choked by the flitting clouds of dust with which the least breath of wind covered the desert. The arch was now broken and partly ruinous; but it still so far projected over and covered in the fountain, that it excluded the sun in a great measure from its waters, which, hardly touched by a straggling beam, while all around was blazing, lay in a steady repose, alike delightful to the eye and the imagination. Stealing from under the arch, they were first received in a marble basin, much defaced indeed, but still cheering the eye, by showing that the place was anciently considered as a station, that the hand of man had been there, and

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<sup>1</sup> See Gab, Gaber. Note 2.

that man's accommodation had been in some measure attended to. The thirsty and weary traveller was reminded by these signs that others had suffered similar difficulties, reposed in the same spot, and, doubtless, found their way in safety to a more fertile country. Again, the scarce visible current which escaped from the basin served to nourish the few trees which surrounded the fountain, and where it sunk into the ground and disappeared its refreshing presence was acknowledged by a carpet of velvet verdure.

In this delightful spot the two warriors halted, and each, after his own fashion, proceeded to relieve his horse from saddle, bit, and rein, and permitted the animals to drink at the basin, ere they refreshed themselves from the fountain-head, which arose under the vault. They then suffered the steeds to go loose, confident that their interest, as well as their domesticated habits, would prevent their straying from the pure water and fresh grass.

Christian and Saracen next sat down together on the turf, and produced each the small allowance of store which they carried for their own refreshment. Yet, ere they severally proceeded to their scanty meal, they eyed each other with that curiosity which the close and doubtful conflict in which they had been so lately engaged was calculated to inspire. Each was desirous to measure the strength, and form some estimate of the character, of an adversary so formidable; and each was compelled to acknowledge that, had he fallen in the conflict, it had been by a noble hand.

The champions formed a striking contrast to each other in person and features, and might have formed no inaccurate representatives of their different nations. The Frank seemed a powerful man, built after the ancient Gothic cast of form, with light brown hair, which, on the removal of his helmet, was seen to curl thick and profusely over his head. His features had acquired, from the hot climate, a hue much darker than those parts of his neck which were less frequently exposed to view, or than was warranted by his full and well-opened blue eye, the colour of his hair, and of the mustachios which thickly shaded his upper lip, while his chin was carefully divested of beard, after the Norman fashion. His nose was Grecian and well formed; his mouth rather large in proportion, but filled with well-set, strong, and beautifully white teeth; his head small, and set upon the neck with much grace. His age could not exceed thirty, but, if the effects of toil and climate were allowed



for, might be three or four years under that period. His form was tall, powerful, and athletic, like that of a man whose strength might, in later life, become unwieldy, but which was hitherto united with lightness and activity. His hands, when he withdrew the mailed gloves, were long, fair, and well proportioned ; the wrist-bones peculiarly large and strong, and the arms remarkably well shaped and brawny. A military hardihood, and careless frankness of expression, characterised his language and his motions ; and his voice had the tone of one more accustomed to command than to obey, and who was in the habit of expressing his sentiments aloud and boldly, whenever he was called upon to announce them.

The Saracen Emir formed a marked and striking contrast with the Western Crusader. His stature was indeed above the middle size, but he was at least three inches shorter than the European, whose size approached the gigantic. His slender limbs, and long spare hands and arms, though well proportioned to his person, and suited to the style of his countenance, did not at first aspect promise the display of vigour and elasticity which the Emir had lately exhibited. But, on looking more closely, his limbs, where exposed to view, seemed divested of all that was fleshy or cumbersome ; so that nothing being left but bone, brawn, and sinew, it was a frame fitted for exertion and fatigue, far beyond that of a bulky champion, whose strength and size are counterbalanced by weight, and who is exhausted by his own exertions. The countenance of the Saracen naturally bore a general national resemblance to the Eastern tribe from whom he descended, and was as unlike as possible to the exaggerated terms in which the minstrels of the day were wont to represent the infidel champions, and the fabulous description which a sister art still presents as the Saracen's Head upon sign-posts. His features were small, well formed, and delicate, though deeply embrowned by the Eastern sun, and terminated by a flowing and curled black beard, which seemed trimmed with peculiar care. The nose was straight and regular, the eyes keen, deep-set, black, and glowing, and his teeth equalled in beauty the ivory of his deserts. The person and proportions of the Saracen, in short, stretched on the turf near to his powerful antagonist, might have been compared to his sheeny and crescent-formed sabre, with its narrow and light, but bright and keen, Damascus blade, contrasted with the long and ponderous Gothic war-sword which was flung unbuckled on the same sod. The Emir was in the very flower of his age, and



might perhaps have been termed eminently beautiful, but for the narrowness of his forehead, and something of too much thinness and sharpness of feature, or at least what might have seemed such in a European estimate of beauty.

The manners of the Eastern warrior were grave, graceful, and decorous; indicating, however, in some particulars, the habitual restraint which men of warm and choleric tempers often set as a guard upon their native impetuosity of disposition, and at the same time a sense of his own dignity, which seemed to impose a certain formality of behaviour in him who entertained it.

This haughty feeling of superiority was perhaps equally entertained by his new European acquaintance, but the effect was different; and the same feeling which dictated to the Christian knight a bold, blunt, and somewhat careless bearing, as one too conscious of his own importance to be anxious about the opinions of others, appeared to prescribe to the Saracen a style of courtesy more studiously and formally observant of ceremony. Both were courteous; but the courtesy of the Christian seemed to flow rather from a good-humoured sense of what was due to others; that of the Moslem from a high feeling of what was to be expected from himself.

The provision which each had made for his refreshment was simple, but the meal of the Saracen was abstemious. A handful of dates, and a morsel of coarse barley-bread, sufficed to relieve the hunger of the latter, whose education had habituated him to the fare of the desert, although, since their Syrian conquests, the Arabian simplicity of life frequently gave place to the most unbounded profusion of luxury. A few draughts from the lovely fountain by which they reposed completed his meal. That of the Christian, though coarse, was more genial. Dried hog's-flesh, the abomination of the Moslemah, was the chief part of his repast; and his drink, derived from a leathern bottle, contained something better than pure element. He fed with more display of appetite, and drank with more appearance of satisfaction, than the Saracen judged it becoming to show in the performance of a mere bodily function; and, doubtless, the secret contempt which each entertained for the other, as the follower of a false religion, was considerably increased by the marked difference of their diet and manners. But each had found the weight of his opponent's arm, and the mutual respect which the bold struggle had created was sufficient to subdue other and inferior considerations. Yet the Saracen

could not help remarking the circumstances which displeased him in the Christian's conduct and manners ; and, after he had witnessed for some time in silence the keen appetite which protracted the knight's banquet long after his own was concluded, he thus addressed him :

'Valiant Nazarene, is it fitting that one who can fight like a man should feed like a dog or a wolf? Even a misbelieving Jew would shudder at the food which you seem to eat with as much relish as if it were fruit from the trees of Paradise.'

'Valiant Saracen,' answered the Christian, looking up with some surprise at the accusation thus unexpectedly brought, 'know thou that I exercise my Christian freedom, in using that which is forbidden to the Jews, being, as they esteem themselves, under the bondage of the old law of Moses. We, Saracen, be it known to thee, have a better warrant for what we do. Ave Maria ! be we thankful.' And, as if in defiance of his companion's scruples, he concluded a short Latin grace with a long draught from the leathern bottle.

'That, too, you call a part of your liberty,' said the Saracen ; 'and as you feed like the brutes, so you degrade yourself to the bestial condition by drinking a poisonous liquor which even they refuse.'

'Know, foolish Saracen,' replied the Christian, without hesitation, 'that thou blasphemest the gifts of God, even with the blasphemy of thy father Ishmael. The juice of the grape is given to him that will use it wisely, as that which cheers the heart of man after toil, refreshes him in sickness, and comforts him in sorrow. He who so enjoyeth it may thank God for his wine-cup as for his daily bread ; and he who abuseth the gift of Heaven is not a greater fool in his intoxication than thou in thine abstinence.'

The keen eye of the Saracen kindled at this sarcasm, and his hand sought the hilt of his poniard. It was but a momentary thought, however, and died away in the recollection of the powerful champion with whom he had to deal, and the desperate grapple, the impression of which still throbbed in his limbs and veins ; and he contented himself with pursuing the contest in colloquy, as more convenient for the time.

'Thy words,' he said, 'O Nazarene, might create anger, did not thy ignorance raise compassion. Seest thou not, O thou more blind than any who asks alms at the door of the mosque, that the liberty thou dost boast of is restrained even in that which is dearest to man's happiness and to his

household ; and that thy law, if thou dost practise it, binds thee in marriage to one single mate, be she sick or healthy, be she fruitful or barren, bring she comfort and joy or clamour and strife, to thy table and to thy bed ? This, Nazarene, I do indeed call slavery ; whereas, to the faithful hath the Prophet assigned upon earth the patriarchal privileges of Abraham our father and of Solomon, the wisest of mankind, having given us here a succession of beauty at our pleasure, and beyond the grave the black-eyed houris of Paradise.'

'Now, by His name that I most reverence in Heaven,' said the Christian, 'and by hers whom I most worship on earth, thou art but a blinded and a bewildered infidel. That diamond signet which thou wearest on thy finger, thou holdest it, doubtless, as of inestimable value ?'

'Balsora and Bagdad cannot show the like,' replied the Saracen ; 'but what avails it to our purpose ?'

'Much,' replied the Frank, 'as thou shalt thyself confess. Take my war-axe and dash the stone into twenty shivers ; would each fragment be as valuable as the original gem, or would they, all collected, bear the tenth part of its estimation ?'

'That is a child's question,' answered the Saracen ; 'the fragments of such a stone would not equal the entire jewel in the degree of hundreds to one.'

'Saracen,' replied the Christian warrior, 'the love which a true knight binds on one only, fair and faithful, is the gem entire ; the affection thou flingest among thy enslaved wives and half-wedded slaves is worthless, comparatively, as the sparkling shivers of the broken diamond.'

'Now, by the Holy Caaba,' said the Emir, 'thou art a madman, who hugs his chain of iron as if it were of gold ! Look more closely. This ring of mine would lose half its beauty were not the signet encircled and enchased with these lesser brilliants, which grace it and set it off. The central diamond is man, firm and entire, his value depending on himself alone ; and this circle of lesser jewels are women, borrowing his lustre, which he deals out to them as best suits his pleasure or his convenience. Take the central stone from the signet, and the diamond itself remains as valuable as ever, while the lesser gems are comparatively of little value. And this is the true reading of thy parable ; for what sayeth the poet Mansour : "It is the favour of man which giveth beauty and comeliness to woman, as the stream glitters no longer when the sun ceaseth to shine."'

'Saracen,' replied the Crusader, 'thou speakest like one who never saw a woman worthy the affection of a soldier. Believe me, couldst thou look upon those of Europe, to whom, after Heaven, we of the order of knighthood vow fealty and devotion, thou wouldst loathe for ever the poor sensual slaves who form thy haram. The beauty of our fair ones gives point to our spears and edge to our swords; their words are our law; and as soon will a lamp shed lustre when unkindled, as a knight distinguish himself by feats of arms, having no mistress of his affection.'

'I have heard of this frenzy among the warriors of the West,' said the Emir, 'and have ever accounted it one of the accompanying symptoms of that insanity which brings you hither to obtain possession of an empty sepulchre. But yet, methinks, so highly have the Franks whom I have met with extolled the beauty of their women, I could be well contented to behold with mine own eyes those charms which can transform such brave warriors into the tools of their pleasure.'

'Brave Saracen,' said the Knight, 'if I were not on a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, it should be my pride to conduct you, on assurance of safety, to the camp of Richard of England, than whom none knows better how to do honour to a noble foe; and though I be poor and unattended, yet have I interest to secure for thee, or any such as thou seemest, not safety only, but respect and esteem. There shouldst thou see several of the fairest beauties of France and Britain form a small circle, the brilliancy of which exceeds ten-thousandfold the lustre of mines of diamonds such as thine.'

'Now, by the corner-stone of the Caaba!' said the Saracen, 'I will accept thy invitation as freely as it is given, if thou wilt postpone thy present intent; and, credit me, brave Nazarene, it were better for thyself to turn back thy horse's head towards the camp of thy people, for to travel towards Jerusalem without a passport is but a wilful casting away of thy life.'

'I have a pass,' answered the Knight, producing a parchment, 'under Saladin's hand and signet.'

The Saracen bent his head to the dust as he recognised the seal and handwriting of the renowned sultan of Egypt and Syria; and having kissed the paper with profound respect, he pressed it to his forehead, then returned it to the Christian, saying, 'Rash Frank, thou hast sinned against thine own blood and mine, for not showing this to me when we met.'

'You came with levelled spear,' said the Knight; 'had a troop of Saracens so assailed me, it might have stood with my honour to have shown the soldan's pass, but never to one man.'

'And yet one man,' said the Saracen, haughtily, 'was enough to interrupt your journey.'

'True, brave Moslem,' replied the Christian; 'but there are few such as thou art. Such falcons fly not in flocks, or, if they do, they pounce not in numbers upon one.'

'Thou dost us but justice,' said the Saracen, evidently gratified by the compliment, as he had been touched by the implied scorn of the European's previous boast; 'from us thou shouldst have had no wrong; but well was it for me that I failed to slay thee, with the safeguard of the king of kings upon thy person. Certain it were, that the cord or the sabre had justly avenged such guilt.'

'I am glad to hear that its influence shall be availing to me,' said the Knight; 'for I have heard that the road is infested with robber tribes, who regard nothing in comparison of an opportunity of plunder.'

'The truth has been told to thee, brave Christian,' said the Saracen; 'but I swear to thee, by the turban of the Prophet, that shouldst thou miscarry in any haunt of such villains, I will myself undertake thy revenge with five thousand horse: I will slay every male of them, and send their women into such distant captivity that the name of their tribe shall never again be heard within five hundred miles of Damascus. I will sow with salt the foundations of their village, and there shall never live thing dwell there, even from that time forward.'

'I had rather the trouble which you design for yourself were in revenge of some other more important person than of me, noble Emir,' replied the Knight; 'but my vow is recorded in Heaven, for good or for evil, and I must be indebted to you for pointing me out the way to my resting-place for this evening.'

'That,' said the Saracen, 'must be under the black covering of my father's tent.'

'This night,' answered the Christian, 'I must pass in prayer and penitence with a holy man, Theodorick of Engaddi, who dwells amongst these wilds, and spends his life in the service of God.'

'I will at least see you safe thither,' said the Saracen.

'That would be pleasant convoy for me,' said the Christian,



'yet might endanger the future security of the good father; for the cruel hand of your people has been red with the blood of the servants of the Lord, and therefore do we come hither in plate and mail, with sword and lance, to open the road to the Holy Sepulchre, and protect the chosen saints and anchorites who yet dwell in this land of promise and of miracle.'

'Nazarene,' said the Moslem, 'in this the Greeks and Syrians have much belied us, seeing we do but after the word of Abubeker Alwakel, the successor of the Prophet, and, after him, the first commander of true believers. "Go forth," he said, "Yezed ben Sophian," when he sent that renowned general to take Syria from the infidels, "quit yourselves like men in battle, but slay neither the aged, the infirm, the women, nor the children. Waste not the land, neither destroy corn and fruit-trees, they are the gifts of Allah. Keep faith when you have made any covenant, even if it be to your own harm. If ye find holy men labouring with their hands, and serving God in the desert, hurt them not, neither destroy their dwellings. But when you find them with shaven crowns, they are of the synagogue of Satan — smite with the sabre, slay, cease not till they become believers or tributaries." As the Caliph, companion of the Prophet, hath told us, so have we done, and those whom our justice has smitten are but the priests of Satan. But unto the good men who, without stirring up nation against nation, worship sincerely in the faith of Issa ben Mariam, we are a shadow and a shield; and such being he whom you seek, even though the light of the Prophet hath not reached him, from me he will only have love, favour, and regard.'

'The anchorite whom I would now visit,' said the warlike pilgrim, 'is, I have heard, no priest; but were he of that anointed and sacred order, I would prove with my good lance, against paynim and infidel —'

'Let us not defy each other, brother,' interrupted the Saracen; 'we shall find, either of us, enough of Franks or of Moslemah on whom to exercise both sword and lance. This Theodorick is protected both by Turk and Arab; and, though one of strange conditions at intervals, yet, on the whole, he bears himself so well as the follower of his own prophet, that he merits the protection of him who was sent —'

'Now, by Our Lady, Saracen,' exclaimed the Christian, 'if thou darest name in the same breath the camel-driver of Mecca with —'

An electrical shock of passion thrilled through the form of the Emir ; but it was only momentary, and the calmness of his reply had both dignity and reason in it, when he said, 'Slander not him whom thou knowest not, the rather that we venerate the founder of thy religion, while we condemn the doctrine which your priests have spun from it. I will myself guide thee to the cavern of the hermit, which, methinks, without my help, thou wouldst find it a hard matter to reach. And, on the way, let us leave to mollahs and to monks to dispute about the divinity of our faith, and speak on themes which belong to youthful warriors — upon battles, upon beautiful women, upon sharp swords, and upon bright armour.'

### CHAPTER III

THE warriors arose from their place of brief rest and simple refreshment, and courteously aided each other while they carefully replaced and adjusted the harness from which they had relieved for the time their trusty steeds. Each seemed familiar with an employment which at that time was a part of necessary, and, indeed, of indispensable, duty. Each also seemed to possess, as far as the difference betwixt the animal and rational species admitted, the confidence and affection of the horse which was the constant companion of his travels and his warfare. With the Saracen, this familiar intimacy was a part of his early habits ; for, in the tents of the Eastern military tribes, the horse of the soldier ranks next to, and almost equal in importance with, his wife and his family ; and, with the European warrior, circumstances, and indeed necessity, rendered his war-horse scarcely less than his brother-in-arms. The steeds, therefore, suffered themselves quietly to be taken from their food and liberty, and neighed and snuffled fondly around their masters, while they were adjusting their accoutrements for farther travel and additional toil. And each warrior, as he prosecuted his own task, or assisted with courtesy his companion, looked with observant curiosity at the equipments of his fellow-traveller, and noted particularly what struck him as peculiar in the fashion in which he arranged his riding accoutrements.

Ere they remounted to resume their journey, the Christian knight again moistened his lips and dipt his hands in the living fountain, and said to his pagan associate of the journey, 'I would I knew the name of this delicious fountain, that I might hold it in my grateful remembrance ; for never did water slake more deliciously a more oppressive thirst than I have this day experienced.'

'It is called in the Arabic language,' answered the Saracen, 'by a name which signifies the Diamond of the Desert.'

‘And well is it so named,’ replied the Christian. ‘My native valley hath a thousand springs, but not to one of them shall I attach hereafter such precious recollection as to this solitary fount, which bestows its liquid treasures where they are not only delightful, but nearly indispensable.’

‘You say truth,’ said the Saracen; ‘for the curse is still on yonder sea of death, and neither man nor beast drink of its waves, nor of the river which feeds without filling it, until this inhospitable desert be passed.’

They mounted, and pursued their journey across the sandy waste. The ardour of noon was now past, and a light breeze somewhat alleviated the terrors of the desert, though not without bearing on its wings an impalpable dust, which the Saracen little heeded, though his heavily-armed companion felt it as such an annoyance, that he hung his iron casque at his saddle-bow, and substituted the light riding-cap, termed in the language of the time a *mortier*, from its resemblance in shape to an ordinary mortar. They rode together for some time in silence, the Saracen performing the part of director and guide of the journey, which he did by observing minute marks and bearings of the distant rocks, to a ridge of which they were gradually approaching. For a little time he seemed absorbed in the task, as a pilot when navigating a vessel through a difficult channel; but they had not proceeded half a league when he seemed secure of his route, and disposed, with more frankness than was usual to his nation, to enter into conversation.

‘You have asked the name,’ he said, ‘of a mute fountain, which hath the semblance, but not the reality, of a living thing. Let me be pardoned to ask the name of the companion with whom I have this day encountered, both in danger and in repose, and which I cannot fancy unknown, even here among the deserts of Palestine?’

‘It is not yet worth publishing,’ said the Christian. ‘Know, however, that among the soldiers of the Cross I am called Kenneth — Kenneth of the Couching Leopard; at home I have other titles, but they would sound harsh in an Eastern ear. Brave Saracen, let me ask which of the tribes of Arabia claims your descent, and by what name you are known.’

‘Sir Kenneth,’ said the Moslem, ‘I joy that your name is such as my lips can easily utter. For me, I am no Arab, yet derive my descent from a line neither less wild nor less warlike. Know, Sir Knight of the Leopard, that I am Sheerkohf, the Lion of the Mountain, and that Kurdistan, from which I

derive my descent, holds no family more noble than that of Seljook.'

'I have heard,' answered the Christian, 'that your great soldan claims his blood from the same source?'

'Thanks to the Prophet, that hath so far honoured our mountains as to send from their bosom him whose word is victory,' answered the Paynim. 'I am but as a worm before the King of Egypt and Syria, and yet in my own land something my name may avail. Stranger, with how many men didst thou come on this warfare?'

'By my faith,' said Sir Kenneth, 'with aid of friends and kinsmen, I was hardly pinched to furnish forth ten well-appointed lances, with maybe some fifty more men, archers and varlets included. Some have deserted my unlucky pennon, some have fallen in battle, several have died of disease, and one trusty armour-bearer, for whose life I am now doing my pilgrimage, lies on the bed of sickness.'

'Christian,' said Sheerkohf, 'here I have five arrows in my quiver, each feathered from the wing of an eagle. When I send one of them to my tents, a thousand warriors mount on horseback; when I send another, an equal force will arise: for the five, I can command five thousand men; and if I send my bow, ten thousand mounted riders will shake the desert. And with thy fifty followers thou hast come to invade a land in which I am one of the meanest!'

'Now, by the rood, Saracen,' retorted the Western warrior, 'thou shouldst know, ere thou vauntest thyself, that one steel glove can crush a whole handful of hornets.'

'Ay, but it must first inclose them within its grasp,' said the Saracen, with a smile which might have endangered their new alliance, had he not changed the subject by adding, 'And is bravery so much esteemed amongst the Christian princes, that thou, thus void of means and of men, canst offer, as thou didst of late, to be my protector and security in the camp of thy brethren?'

'Know, Saracen,' said the Christian, 'since such is thy style, that the name of a knight, and the blood of a gentleman, entitle him to place himself on the same rank with sovereigns even of the first degree, in so far as regards all but regal authority and dominion. Were Richard of England himself to wound the honour of a knight as poor as I am, he could not, by the law of chivalry, deny him the combat.'

'Methinks I should like to look upon so strange a scene,'



said the Emir, 'in which a leathern belt and a pair of spurs put the poorest on a level with the most powerful.'

'You must add free blood and a fearless heart,' said the Christian; 'then, perhaps, you will not have spoken untruly of the dignity of knighthood.'

'And mix you as boldly amongst the females of your chiefs and leaders?' asked the Saracen.

'God forbid,' said the Knight of the Leopard, 'that the poorest knight in Christendom should not be free, in all honourable service, to devote his hand and sword, the fame of his actions, and the fixed devotion of his heart, to the fairest princess who ever wore coronet on her brow!'

'But a little while since,' said the Saracen, 'and you described love as the highest treasure of the heart — thine hath undoubtedly been high and nobly bestowed?'

'Stranger,' answered the Christian, blushing deeply as he spoke, 'we tell not rashly where it is we have bestowed our choicest treasures; it is enough for thee to know that, as thou sayest, my love is highly and nobly bestowed — most highly, most nobly; but if thou wouldst hear of love and broken lances, venture thyself, as thou sayest, to the camp of the Crusaders, and thou wilt find exercise for thine ears, and, if thou wilt, for thy hands too.'

The Eastern warrior, raising himself in his stirrups and shaking aloft his lance, replied, 'Hardly, I fear, shall I find one with a crossed shoulder who will exchange with me the cast of the jerrid.'

'I will not promise for that,' replied the Knight, 'though there be in the camp certain Spaniards, who have right good skill in your Eastern game of hurling the javelin.'

'Dogs and sons of dogs!' ejaculated the Saracen; 'what have these Spaniards to do to come hither to combat the true believers, who, in their own land, are their lords and task-masters? With them I would mix in no warlike pastime.'

'Let not the knights of Leon or Asturias hear you speak thus of them,' said the Knight of the Leopard; 'but,' added he, smiling at the recollection of the morning's combat, 'if, instead of a reed, you were inclined to stand the cast of a battle-axe, there are enough of Western warriors who would gratify your longing.'

'By the beard of my father, sir,' said the Saracen, with an approach to laughter, 'the game is too rough for mere sport; I will never shun them in battle, but my head (pressing his

hand to his brow) will not, for a while, permit me to seek them in sport.'

'I would you saw the axe of King Richard,' answered the Western warrior, 'to which that which hangs at my saddle-bow weighs but as a feather.'

'We hear much of that island sovereign,' said the Saracen, 'art thou one of his subjects?'

'One of his followers I am, for this expedition,' answered the Knight, 'and honoured in the service; but not born his subject, although a native of the island in which he reigns.'

'How mean you?' said the Eastern soldier; 'have you then two kings in one poor island?'

'As thou sayest,' said the Scot, for such was Sir Kenneth by birth — 'it is even so; and yet, although the inhabitants of the two extremities of that island are engaged in frequent war, the country can, as thou seest, furnish forth such a body of men-at-arms as may go far to shake the unholy hold which your master hath laid on the cities of Zion.'

'By the beard of Saladin, Nazarene, but that it is a thoughtless and boyish folly, I could laugh at the simplicity of your great sultan, who comes hither to make conquests of deserts and rocks, and dispute the possession of them with those who have tenfold numbers at command, while he leaves a part of his narrow islet, in which he was born a sovereign, to the dominion of another sceptre than his. Surely, Sir Kenneth, you and the other good men of your country should have submitted yourselves to the dominion of this King Richard, ere you left your native land, divided against itself, to set forth on this expedition?'

Hasty and fierce was Kenneth's answer. 'No, by the bright light of Heaven! If the King of England had not set forth to the Crusade till he was sovereign of Scotland, the crescent might, for me, and all true-hearted Scots, glimmer for ever on the walls of Zion.'

Thus far he had proceeded, when, suddenly recollecting himself, he muttered, '*Mea culpa — mea culpa!* what have I, a soldier of the Cross, to do with recollection of war betwixt Christian nations?'

The rapid expression of feeling corrected by the dictates of duty did not escape the Moslem, who, if he did not entirely understand all which it conveyed, saw enough to convince him with the assurance that Christians, as well as Moslemah, had private feelings of personal pique and national quarrels which

were not entirely reconcilable. But the Saracens were a race polished, perhaps, to the utmost extent which their religion permitted, and particularly capable of entertaining high ideas of courtesy and politeness; and such sentiments prevented his taking any notice of the inconsistency of Sir Kenneth's feelings, in the opposite characters of a Scot and a Crusader.

Meanwhile, as they advanced, the scene began to change around them. They were now turning to the eastward, and had reached the range of steep and barren hills which binds in that quarter the naked plain, and varies the surface of the country, without changing its sterile character. Sharp, rocky eminences began to arise around them, and, in a short time, deep declivities, and ascents, both formidable in height and difficult from the narrowness of the path, offered to the travellers obstacles of a different kind from those with which they had recently contended. Dark caverns and chasms amongst the rocks, those grottoes so often alluded to in Scripture, yawned fearfully on either side as they proceeded, and the Scottish knight was informed by the Emir that these were often the refuge of beasts of prey, or of men still more ferocious, who, driven to desperation by the constant war, and the oppression exercised by the soldiery, as well of the Cross as of the Crescent, had become robbers, and spared neither rank nor religion, neither sex nor age, in their depredations.

The Scottish knight listened with indifference to the accounts of ravages committed by wild beasts or wicked men, secure as he felt himself in his own valour and personal strength; but he was struck with mysterious dread when he recollected that he was now in the awful wilderness of the forty days' fast, and the scene of the actual personal temptation, wherewith the Evil Principle was permitted to assail the Son of Man. He withdrew his attention gradually from the light and worldly conversation of the infidel warrior beside him, and, however acceptable his gay and gallant bravery would have rendered him as a companion elsewhere, Sir Kenneth felt as if, in those wildernesses — the waste and dry places, in which the foul spirits were wont to wander when expelled the mortals whose forms they possessed — a bare-footed friar would have been a better associate than the gay but unbelieving paynim.

These feelings embarrassed him, the rather that the Saracen's spirits appeared to rise with the journey, and because the farther he penetrated into the gloomy recesses of the mountains, the lighter became his conversation, and when he found that

unanswered, the louder grew his song. Sir Kenneth knew enough of the Eastern languages to be assured that he chanted sonnets of love, containing all the glowing praises of beauty in which the Oriental poets are so fond of luxuriating, and which, therefore, were peculiarly unfitted for a serious or devotional strain of thought, the feeling best becoming the Wilderness of the Temptation. With inconsistency enough, the Saracen also sung lays in praise of wine, the liquid ruby of the Persian poets, and his gaiety at length became so unsuitable to the Christian knight's contrary train of sentiments, as, but for the promise of amity which they had exchanged, would most likely have made Sir Kenneth take measures to change his note. As it was, the Crusader felt as if he had by his side some gay licentious fiend, who endeavoured to ensnare his soul, and endanger his immortal salvation, by inspiring loose thoughts of earthly pleasure, and thus polluting his devotion, at a time when his faith as a Christian and his vow as a pilgrim called on him for a serious and penitential state of mind. He was thus greatly perplexed, and undecided how to act; and it was in a tone of hasty displeasure that, at length breaking silence, he interrupted the lay of the celebrated Rudpiki, in which he prefers the mole on his mistress's bosom to all the wealth of Bokhara and Samarcand.

'Saracen,' said the Crusader, sternly, 'blinded as thou art, and plunged amidst the errors of a false law, thou shouldst yet comprehend that there are some places more holy than others, and that there are some scenes also in which the Evil One hath more than ordinary power over sinful mortals. I will not tell thee for what awful reason this place — these rocks, these caverns with their gloomy arches, leading as it were to the central abyss — are held an especial haunt of Satan and his angels. It is enough, that I have been long warned to beware of this place by wise and holy men, to whom the qualities of the unholy region are well known. Wherefore, Saracen, forbear thy foolish and ill-timed levity, and turn thy thoughts to things more suited to the spot; although, alas for thee! thy best prayers are but as blasphemy and sin.'

The Saracen listened with some surprise, and then replied, with good-humour and gaiety, only so far repressed as courtesy required, 'Good Sir Kenneth, methinks you deal unequally by your companion, or else ceremony is but indifferently taught amongst your Western tribes. I took no offence when I saw you gorge hog's flesh and drink wine, and permitted you to

enjoy a treat which you called your Christian liberty, only pitying in my heart your foul pastimes. Wherefore, then, shouldst thou take scandal because I cheer, to the best of my power, a gloomy road with a cheerful verse? What saith the poet — “Song is like the dews of Heaven on the bosom of the desert: it cools the path of the traveller.”’

‘Friend Saracen,’ said the Christian, ‘I blame not the love of minstrelsy and of the *gaie science*; albeit we yield unto it even too much room in our thoughts, when they should be bent on better things. But prayers and holy psalms are better fitting than “lais” of love, or of wine-cups, when men walk in this Valley of the Shadow of Death, full of fiends and demons, whom the prayers of holy men have driven forth from the haunts of humanity to wander amidst scenes as accursed as themselves.’

‘Speak not thus of the genii, Christian,’ answered the Saracen, ‘for know, thou speakest to one whose line and nation drew their origin from the immortal race which your sect fear and blaspheme.’

‘I well thought,’ answered the Crusader, ‘that your blinded race had their descent from the foul fiend, without whose aid you would never have been able to maintain this blessed land of Palestine against so many valiant soldiers of God. I speak not thus of thee in particular, Saracen, but generally of thy people and religion. Strange is it to me, however, not that you should have the descent from the Evil One, but that you should boast of it.’

‘From whom should the bravest boast of descending, saving from him that is bravest?’ said the Saracen; ‘from whom should the proudest trace their line so well as from the Dark Spirit which would rather fall headlong by force than bend the knee by his will? Eblis may be hated, stranger, but he must be feared; and such as Eblis are his descendants of Kurdistan.’

Tales of magic and of necromancy were the learning of the period, and Sir Kenneth heard his companion’s confession of diabolical descent without any disbelief, and without much wonder; yet not without a secret shudder at finding himself in this fearful place, in the company of one who avouched himself to belong to such a lineage. Naturally unsusceptible, however, of fear, he crossed himself, and stoutly demanded of the Saracen an account of the pedigree which he had boasted. The latter readily complied.

‘Know, brave stranger,’ he said, ‘that when the cruel Zohauk,



one of the descendants of Giamschid,<sup>1</sup> held the throne of Persia, he formed a league with the Powers of Darkness, amidst the secret vaults of Istakhar — vaults which the hands of the elementary spirits had hewn out of the living rock, long before Adam himself had an existence. Here he fed, with daily oblations of human blood, two devouring serpents, which had become, according to the poets, a part of himself, and to sustain whom he levied a tax of daily human sacrifices, till the exhausted patience of his subjects caused some to raise up the scimitar of resistance, like the valiant Blacksmith and the victorious Feridoun, by whom the tyrant was at length dethroned, and imprisoned for ever in the dismal caverns of the mountain Damavend. But ere that deliverance had taken place, and whilst the power of the bloodthirsty tyrant was at its height, the band of ravening slaves whom he had sent forth to purvey victims for his daily sacrifice brought to the vaults of the palace of Istakhar seven sisters so beautiful that they seemed seven houris. These seven maidens were the daughters of a sage, who had no treasures save those beauties and his own wisdom. The last was not sufficient to foresee this misfortune, the former seemed ineffectual to prevent it. The eldest exceeded not her twentieth year, the youngest had scarce attained her thirteenth; and so like were they to each other, that they could not have been distinguished but for the difference of height, in which they gradually rose in easy gradation above each other, like the ascent which leads to the gates of Paradise. So lovely were these seven sisters when they stood in the darksome vault, disrobed of all clothing saving a cymar of white silk, that their charms moved the hearts of those who were not mortal. Thunder muttered, the earth shook, the wall of the vault was rent, and at the chasm entered one dressed like a hunter, with bow and shafts, and followed by six others, his brethren. They were tall men, and though dark, yet comely to behold, but their eyes had more the glare of those of the dead than the light which lives under the eyelids of the living. "Zeineb," said the leader of the band, and as he spoke he took the eldest sister by the hand, and his voice was soft, low, and melancholy, "I am Cothrob, king of the subterranean world, and supreme chief of Ginnistan. I and my brethren are of those who, created out of the pure elementary fire, disdained, even at the command of Omnipotence, to do homage to a clod of earth, because it was called man. Thou mayst have heard of us as

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<sup>1</sup> See Note 3.

cruel, unrelenting, and persecuting. It is false. We are by nature kind and generous ; only vengeful when insulted, only cruel when affronted. We are true to those who trust us ; and we have heard the invocations of thy father, the sage Mithrasp, who wisely worships not alone the Origin of Good, but that which is called the Source of Evil. You and your sisters are on the eve of death ; but let each give to us one hair from your fair tresses, in token of fealty, and we will carry you many miles from hence to a place of safety, where you may bid defiance to Zohauk and his ministers." The fear of instant death, saith the poet, is like the rod of the prophet Haroun, which devoured all other rods, when transformed into snakes before the King of Pharaoh ; and the daughters of the Persian sage were less apt than others to be afraid of the addresses of a spirit. They gave the tribute which Cothroba demanded, and in an instant the sisters were transported to an enchanted castle on the mountains of Tugrut, in Kurdistan, and were never again seen by mortal eye. But in process of time seven youths, distinguished in the war and in the chase, appeared in the environs of the castle of the demons. They were darker, taller, fiercer, and more resolute than any of the scattered inhabitants of the valleys of Kurdistan ; and they took to themselves wives, and became fathers of the seven tribes of the Kurdmans, whose valour is known throughout the universe.'

The Christian knight heard with wonder the wild tale, of which Kurdistan still possesses the traces, and, after a moment's thought, replied, 'Verily, sir knight, you have spoken well : your genealogy may be dreaded and hated, but it cannot be contemned. Neither do I any longer wonder at your obstinacy in a false faith ; since, doubtless, it is part of the fiendish disposition which hath descended from your ancestors, those infernal huntsmen, as you have described them, to love falsehood rather than truth ; and I no longer marvel that your spirits become high and exalted, and vent themselves in verse and in tunes, when you approach to the places encumbered by the haunting of evil spirits, which must excite in you that joyous feeling which others experience when approaching the land of their human ancestry.'

'By my father's beard, I think thou hast the right,' said the Saracen, rather amused than offended by the freedom with which the Christian had uttered his reflections ; 'for, though the Prophet — blessed be his name ! — hath sown amongst us the seed of a better faith than our ancestors learned in the ghostly

halls of Tugrut, yet we are not willing, like other Moslemah, to pass hasty doom on the lofty and powerful elementary spirits from whom we claim our origin. These genii, according to our belief and hope, are not altogether reprobate, but are still in the way of probation, and may hereafter be punished or rewarded. Leave we this to the mollahs and the imaums. Enough that with us the reverence for these spirits is not altogether effaced by what we have learned from the Koran. and that many of us still sing, in memorial of our fathers more ancient faith, such verses as these.' So saying, he proceeded to chant verses, very ancient in the language and structure, which some have thought derive their source from the worshippers of Arimanes, the Evil Principle.

#### AHRIMAN

Dark Ahriman, whom Irak still  
Holds origin of woe and ill,  
When, bending at thy shrine,  
We view the world with troubled eye,  
Where see we 'neath the extended sky,  
An empire matching thine ?

If the Benigner Power can yield  
A fountain in the desert field,  
Where weary pilgrims drink ;  
Thine are the waves that lash the rock,  
Thine the tornado's deadly shock,  
Where countless navies sink.

Or if He bid the soil dispense  
Balsams to cheer the sinking sense,  
How few can they deliver  
From lingering pains, or pang intense  
Red fever, spotted pestilence,  
The arrows of thy quiver ?

Chief in man's bosom sits thy sway,  
And frequent, while in words we pray  
Before another throne,  
Whate'er of specious form be there,  
The secret meaning of the prayer  
Is, Ahriman, thine own.

Say, hast thou feeling, sense, and form,  
Thunder thy voice, thy garments storm,  
As Eastern magi say ;  
With sentient soul of hate and wrath,  
And wings to sweep thy deadly path,  
And fangs to tear thy prey ?

Or art thou mix'd in Nature's source,  
 An ever-operating force,  
   Converting good to ill ;  
 An evil principle innate,  
 Contending with our better fate,  
   And oh ! victorious still ?

Howe'er it be, dispute is vain.  
 On all without thou hold'st thy reign,  
   Nor less on all within ;  
 Each mortal passion's fierce career,  
 Love, hate, ambition, joy, and fear,  
   Thou goadest into sin.

Whene'er a sunny gleam appears,  
 To brighten up our vale of tears,  
   Thou art not distant far ;  
 'Mid such brief solace of our lives,  
 Thou whett'st our very banquet-knives  
   To tools of death and war.

Thus, from the moment of our birth,  
 Long as we linger on the earth,  
   Thou rulest the fate of men ;  
 Thine are the pangs of life's last hour,  
 And — who dare answer ? — is thy power,  
   Dark Spirit ! ended THEN ?<sup>1</sup>

These verses may perhaps have been the not unnatural effusion of some half-enlightened philosopher, who, in the fabled deity, Arimanes, saw but the prevalence of moral and physical evil ; but in the ears of Sir Kenneth of the Leopard they had a different effect, and, sung as they were by one who had just boasted himself a descendant of demons, sounded very like an address of worship to the Arch-fiend himself. He weighed within himself whether, on hearing such blasphemy in the very desert where Satan had stood rebuked for demanding homage, taking an abrupt leave of the Saracen was sufficient to testify his abhorrence ; or whether he was not rather constrained by his vow as a Crusader to defy the infidel to combat on the spot, and leave him food for the beasts of the wilderness, when his attention was suddenly caught by an unexpected apparition.

The light was now verging low, yet served the Knight still to discern that they two were no longer alone in the forest, but were closely watched by a figure of great height and very thin, which skipped over rocks and bushes with so much agility as, added to the wild and hirsute appearance of the individual,

<sup>1</sup> See Hymn to Ahriman. Note 4.

reminded him of the fauns and silvans whose images he had seen in the ancient temples of Rome. As the single-hearted Scotchman had never for a moment doubted these gods of the ancient Gentiles to be actually devils, so he now hesitated not to believe that the blasphemous hymn of the Saracen had raised up an infernal spirit.

‘But what recks it?’ said stout Sir Kenneth to himself; ‘down with the fiend and his worshippers!’

He did not, however, think it necessary to give the same warning of defiance to two enemies as he would unquestionably have afforded to one. His hand was upon his mace, and perhaps the unwary Saracen would have been paid for his Persian poetry by having his brains dashed out on the spot, without any reason assigned for it; but the Scottish knight was spared from committing what would have been a sore blot in his shield of arms. The apparition, on which his eyes had been fixed for some time, had at first appeared to dog their path by concealing itself behind rocks and shrubs, using those advantages of the ground with great address, and surmounting its irregularities with surprising agility. At length, just as the Saracen paused in his song, the figure, which was that of a tall man clothed in goat-skins, sprung into the midst of the path, and seized a rein of the Saracen’s bridle in either hand, confronting thus and bearing back the noble horse, which, unable to endure the manner in which this sudden assailant pressed the long-armed bit and the severe curb, which, according to the Eastern fashion, was a solid ring of iron, reared upright, and finally fell backwards on his master, who, however, avoided the peril of the fall by lightly throwing himself to one side.

The assailant then shifted his grasp from the bridle of the horse to the throat of the rider, flung himself above the struggling Saracen, and, despite of his youth and activity, kept him undermost, wreathing his long arms above those of his prisoner, who called out angrily, and yet half-laughing at the same time — ‘Hamako — fool — unloose me — this passes thy privilege — unloose me, or I will use my dagger.’

‘Thy dagger, infidel dog!’ said the figure in the goat-skins, ‘hold it in thy gripe if thou canst!’ and in an instant he wrenched the Saracen’s weapon out of its owner’s hand and brandished it over his head.

‘Help, Nazarene!’ cried Sheerkohf, now seriously alarmed — ‘help, or the Hamako will slay me.’

‘Slay thee!’ replied the dweller of the desert; ‘and well



hast thou merited death, for singing thy blasphemous hymns, not only to the praise of thy false prophet, who is the foul fiend's harbinger, but to that of the Author of Evil himself.'

The Christian knight had hitherto looked on as one stupified, so strangely had this rencontre contradicted, in its progress and event, all that he had previously conjectured. He felt, however, at length, that it touched his honour to interfere in behalf of his discomfited companion; and therefore addressed himself to the victorious figure in the goat-skins.

'Whosoe'er thou art,' he said, 'and whether of good or of evil, know that I am sworn for the time to be true companion to the Saracen whom thou holdest under thee; therefore, I pray thee to let him arise, else I will do battle with thee in his behalf.'

'And a proper quarrel it were,' answered the Hamako, 'for a Crusader to do battle in — for the sake of an unbaptized dog to combat one of his own holy faith! Art thou come forth to the wilderness to fight for the Crescent against the Cross? A goodly soldier of God art thou, to listen to those who sing the praises of Satan!'

Yet, while he spoke thus, he arose himself, and, suffering the Saracen to arise also, returned him his cangiar or poniard.

'Thou seest to what a point of peril thy presumption hath brought thee,' continued he of the goat-skins, now addressing Sheerkohf, 'and by what weak means thy practised skill and boasted agility can be foiled, when such is Heaven's pleasure. Wherefore, beware, O Ilderim! for know that, were there not a twinkle in the star of thy nativity which promises for thee something that is good and gracious in Heaven's good time, we two had not parted till I had torn asunder the throat which so lately trilled forth blasphemies.'

'Hamako,' said the Saracen, without any appearance of resenting the violent language, and yet more violent assault, to which he had been subjected — 'I pray thee, good Hamako, to beware how thou dost again urge thy privilege over far; for though, as a good Moslem, I respect those whom Heaven hath deprived of ordinary reason, in order to endow them with the spirit of prophecy, yet I like not other men's hands on the bridle of my horse, neither upon my own person. Speak, therefore, what thou wilt, secure of any resentment from me; but gather so much sense as to apprehend that, if thou shalt again proffer me any violence, I will strike thy shagged head from thy meagre shoulders. And to thee, friend Kenneth,' he

added, as he remounted his steed, 'I must needs say that, in a companion through the desert, I love friendly deeds better than fair words. Of the last thou hast given me enough; but it had been better to have aided me more speedily in my struggle with this Hamako, who had wellnigh taken my life in his frenzy.'

'By my faith,' said the Knight, 'I did somewhat fail — was somewhat tardy in rendering thee instant help; but the strangeness of the assailant, the suddenness of the scene — it was as if thy wild and wicked lay had raised the devil among us, and such was my confusion, that two or three minutes elapsed ere I could take to my weapon.'

'Thou art but a cold and considerate friend,' said the Saracen; 'and, had the Hamako been one grain more frantic, thy companion had been slain by thy side, to thy eternal dishonour, without thy stirring a finger in his aid, although thou satest by, mounted and in arms.'

'By my word, Saracen,' said the Christian, 'if thou wilt have it in plain terms, I thought that strange figure was the devil; and being of thy lineage, I knew not what family secret you might be communicating to each other, as you lay lovingly rolling together on the sand.'

'Thy gibe is no answer, brother Kenneth,' said the Saracen; 'for know that, had my assailant been in very deed the Prince of Darkness, thou wert bound not the less to enter into combat with him in thy comrade's behalf. Know, also, that whatever there may be of foul or of fiendish about the Hamako belongs more to your lineage than to mine, this Hamako being, in truth, the anchorite whom thou art come hither to visit.'

'This!' said Sir Kenneth, looking at the athletic yet wasted figure before him — 'this? Thou mockest, Saracen: this cannot be the venerable Theodorick!'

'Ask himself, if thou wilt not believe me,' answered Sheer-kohf; and ere the words had left his mouth the hermit gave evidence in his own behalf.

'I am Theodorick of Engaddi,' he said — 'I am the walker of the desert — I am friend of the cross, and flail of all infidels, heretics, and devil-worshippers. Avoid ye — avoid ye! Down with Mahound, Termagaunt, and all their adherents!' So saying, he pulled from under his shaggy garment a sort of flail or jointed club, bound with iron, which he brandished round his head with singular dexterity.

'Thou seest thy saint,' said the Saracen, laughing, for the

first time, at the unmitigated astonishment with which Sir Kenneth looked on the wild gestures and heard the wayward muttering of Theodorick, who, after swinging his flail in every direction, apparently quite reckless whether it encountered the head of either of his companions, finally showed his own strength and the soundness of the weapon by striking into fragments a large stone which lay near him.

‘This is a madman,’ said Sir Kenneth.

‘Not the worse saint,’ returned the Moslem, speaking according to the well-known Eastern belief that madmen are under the influence of immediate inspiration. ‘Know, Christian, that when one eye is extinguished the other becomes more keen, when one hand is cut off the other becomes more powerful; so, when our reason in human things is disturbed or destroyed, our view heavenward becomes more acute and perfect.’

Here the voice of the Saracen was drowned in that of the hermit, who began to halloo aloud in a wild chanting tone — ‘I am Theodorick of Engaddi — I am the torch-brand of the desert — I am the flail of the infidels. The lion and the leopard shall be my comrades, and draw nigh to my cell for shelter, neither shall the goat be afraid of their fangs. I am the torch and the lantern. *Kyrie eleison!*’

He closed his song by a short race, and ended that again by three forward bounds, which would have done him great credit in a gymnastic academy, but became his character of hermit so indifferently, that the Scottish knight was altogether confounded and bewildered.

The Saracen seemed to understand him better. ‘You see,’ he said, ‘that he expects us to follow him to his cell, which, indeed, is our only place of refuge for the night. You are the leopard, from the portrait on your shield; I am the lion, as my name imports; and, by the goat, alluding to his garb of goat-skins, he means himself. We must keep him in sight, however, for he is as fleet as a dromedary.’

In fact, the task was a difficult one, for though the reverend guide stopped from time to time and waved his hand, as if to encourage them to come on, yet, well acquainted with all the winding dells and passes of the desert, and gifted with uncommon activity, which, perhaps, an unsettled state of mind kept in constant exercise, he led the knights through chasms and along footpaths where even the light-armed Saracen, with his well-trained barb, was in considerable risk, and where the iron-

sheathed European and his over-burdened horse found themselves in such imminent peril as the rider would gladly have exchanged for the dangers of a general action. Glad he was when, at length, after this wild race, he beheld the holy man who had led it standing in front of a cavern, with a large torch in his hand, composed of a piece of wood dipt in bitumen, which cast a broad and flickering light, and emitted a strong sulphureous smell.

Undeterred by the stifling vapour, the Knight threw himself from his horse and entered the cavern, which afforded small appearance of accommodation. The cell was divided into two parts, in the outward of which were an altar of stone and a crucifix made of reeds : this served the anchorite for his chapel. On one side of this outward cave the Christian knight, though not without scruple, arising from religious reverence to the objects around, fastened up his horse and arranged him for the night, in imitation of the Saracen, who gave him to understand that such was the custom of the place. The hermit, meanwhile, was busied putting his inner apartment in order to receive his guests, and there they soon joined him. At the bottom of the outer cave, a small aperture, closed with a door of rough plank, led into the sleeping-apartment of the hermit, which was more commodious. The floor had been brought to a rough level by the labour of the inhabitant, and then strewed with white sand, which he daily sprinkled with water from a small fountain which bubbled out of the rock in one corner, affording, in that stifling climate, refreshment alike to the ear and the taste. Mattresses, wrought of twisted flags, lay by the side of the cell ; the sides, like the floor, had been roughly brought to shape, and several herbs and flowers were hung around them. Two waxen torches, which the hermit lighted, gave a cheerful air to the place, which was rendered agreeable by its fragrance and coolness.

There were implements of labour in one corner of the apartment, in the other was a niche for a rude statue of the Virgin. A table and two chairs showed that they must be the handiwork of the anchorite, being different in their form from Oriental accommodations. The former was covered, not only with reeds and pulse, but also with dried flesh, which Theodorick assiduously placed in such arrangement as should invite the appetite of his guests. This appearance of courtesy, though mute, and expressed by gesture only, seemed to Sir Kenneth something entirely irreconcilable with his former wild and violent demeanour. The movements of the hermit were now

become composed, and apparently it was only a sense of religious humiliation which prevented his features, emaciated as they were by his austere mode of life, from being majestic and noble. He trode his cell as one who seemed born to rule over men, but who had abdicated his empire to become the servant of Heaven. Still, it must be allowed that his gigantic size, the length of his unshaven locks and beard, and the fire of a deep-set and wild eye were rather attributes of a soldier than of a recluse.

Even the Saracen seemed to regard the anchorite with some veneration while he was thus employed, and he whispered in a low tone to Sir Kenneth, 'The Hamako is now in his better mind ; but he will not speak until we have eaten — such is his vow.'

It was in silence, accordingly, that Theodorick motioned to the Scot to take his place on one of the low chairs, while Sheerkohf placed himself, after the custom of his nation, upon a cushion of mats. The hermit then held up both hands, as if blessing the refreshment which he had placed before his guests, and they proceeded to eat in silence as profound as his own. To the Saracen this gravity was natural, and the Christian imitated his taciturnity, while he employed his thoughts on the singularity of his own situation, and the contrast betwixt the wild, furious gesticulations, loud cries, and fierce actions of Theodorick, when they first met him, and the demure, solemn, decorous assiduity with which he now performed the duties of hospitality.

When their meal was ended, the hermit, who had not himself eaten a morsel, removed the fragments from the table, and placing before the Saracen a pitcher of sherbet, assigned to the Scot a flask of wine.

'Drink,' he said, 'my children,' they were the first words he had spoken ; 'the gifts of God are to be enjoyed, when the Giver is remembered.'

Having said this, he retired to the outward cell, probably for performance of his devotions, and left his guests together in the inner apartment ; when Sir Kenneth endeavoured, by various questions, to draw from Sheerkohf what that Emir knew concerning his host. He was interested by more than mere curiosity in these inquiries. Difficult as it was to reconcile the outrageous demeanour of the recluse at his first appearance to his present humble and placid behaviour, it seemed yet more impossible to think it consistent with the high con-



sideration in which, according to what Sir Kenneth had learned, this hermit was held by the most enlightened divines of the Christian world. Theodorick, the hermit of Engaddi, had, in that character, been the correspondent of popes and councils; to whom his letters, full of eloquent fervour, had described the miseries imposed by the unbelievers upon the Latin Christians in the Holy Land, in colours scarce inferior to those employed at the Council of Clermont by the Hermit Peter, when he preached the first Crusade. To find, in a person so reverend and so much revered, the frantic gestures of a mad fakir, induced the Christian knight to pause ere he could resolve to communicate to him certain important matters which he had in charge from some of the leaders of the Crusade.

It had been a main object of Sir Kenneth's pilgrimage, attempted by a route so unusual, to make such communications; but what he had that night seen induced him to pause and reflect ere he proceeded to the execution of his commission. From the Emir he could not extract much information, but the general tenor was as follows:—That, as he had heard, the hermit had been once a brave and valiant soldier, wise in council and fortunate in battle, which last he could easily believe from the great strength and agility which he had often seen him display; that he had appeared at Jerusalem in the character not of a pilgrim, but in that of one who had devoted himself to dwell for the remainder of his life in the Holy Land. Shortly afterwards, he fixed his residence amid the scenes of desolation where they now found him, respected by the Latins for his austere devotion, and by the Turks and Arabs on account of the symptoms of insanity which he displayed, and which they ascribed to inspiration. It was from them he had the name of Hamako, which expresses such a character in the Turkish language. Sheerkohf himself seemed at a loss how to rank their host. He had been, he said, a wise man, and could often for many hours together speak lessons of virtue or wisdom, without the slightest appearance of inaccuracy. At other times he was wild and violent, but never before had he seen him so mischievously disposed as he had that day appeared to be. His rage was chiefly provoked by any affront to his religion; and there was a story of some wandering Arabs who had insulted his worship and defaced his altar, and whom he had on that account attacked and slain with the short flail, which he carried with him in lieu of all other weapons. This incident had made a great noise, and it was as much the fear of the

hermit's iron flail as regard for his character as a hamako which caused the roving tribes to respect his dwelling and his chapel. His fame had spread so far, that Saladin had issued particular orders that he should be spared and protected. He himself, and other Moslem lords of rank, had visited the cell more than once, partly from curiosity, partly that they expected from a man so learned as the Christian hamako some insight into the secrets of futurity. 'He had,' continued the Saracen, 'a *rashid*, or observatory, of great height, contrived to view the heavenly bodies, and particularly the planetary system; by whose movements and influences, as both Christian and Moslem believed, the course of human events was regulated, and might be predicted.'

This was the substance of the Emir Sheerkohf's information, and it left Sir Kenneth in doubt whether the character of insanity arose from the occasional excessive fervour of the hermit's zeal, or whether it was not altogether fictitious, and assumed for the sake of the immunities which it afforded. Yet it seemed that the infidels had carried their complaisance towards him to an uncommon length, considering the fanaticism of the followers of Mohammed, in the midst of whom he was living, though the professed enemy of their faith. He thought also there was more intimacy of acquaintance betwixt the hermit and the Saracen than the words of the latter had induced him to anticipate; and it had not escaped him that the former had called the latter by a name different from that which he himself had assumed. All these considerations authorised caution, if not suspicion. He determined to observe his host closely, and not to be over-hasty in communicating with him on the important charge entrusted to him.

'Beware, Saracen,' he said; 'methinks our host's imagination wanders as well on the subject of names as upon other matters. Thy name is Sheerkohf, and he called thee but now by another.'

'My name, when in the tent of my father,' replied the Kurdman, 'was Ilderim, and by this I am still distinguished by many. In the field, and to soldiers, I am known as the Lion of the Mountain, being the name my good sword hath won for me. But hush, the Hamako comes; it is to warn us to rest. I know his custom: none must watch him at his vigils.'

The anchorite accordingly entered, and folding his arms on his bosom as he stood before them, said with a solemn voice, 'Blessed be His name, who hath appointed the quiet night to

follow the busy day, and the calm sleep to refresh the wearied limbs, and to compose the troubled spirit !'

Both warriors replied 'Amen !' and, arising from the table, prepared to betake themselves to the couches which their host indicated by waving his hand, as, making a reverence to each, he again withdrew from the apartment.

The Knight of the Leopard then disarmed himself of his heavy panoply, his Saracen companion kindly assisting him to undo his buckler and clasps, until he remained in the close dress of chamois leather which knights and men-at-arms used to wear under their harness. The Saracen, if he had admired the strength of his adversary when sheathed in steel, was now no less struck with the accuracy of proportion displayed in his nervous and well-compacted figure. The knight, on the other hand, as, in exchange of courtesy, he assisted the Saracen to disrobe himself of his upper garments, that he might sleep with more convenience, was on his side at a loss to conceive how such slender proportions and slimness of figure could be reconciled with the vigour he had displayed in personal contest.

Each warrior prayed, ere he addressed himself to his place of rest. The Moslem turned towards his *kebla*, the point to which the prayer of each follower of the Prophet was to be addressed, and murmured his heathen orisons ; while the Christian, withdrawing from the contamination of the infidel's neighbourhood, placed his huge cross-handled sword upright, and kneeling before it as the sign of salvation, told his rosary with a devotion which was enhanced by the recollection of the scenes through which he had passed, and the dangers from which he had been rescued in the course of the day. Both warriors, worn by toil and travel, were soon fast asleep, each on his separate pallet.

## CHAPTER IV

KENNETH, the Scot, was uncertain how long his senses had been lost in profound repose, when he was roused to recollection by a sense of oppression on his chest, which at first suggested a flitting dream of struggling with a powerful opponent, and at length recalled him fully to his senses. He was about to demand who was there, when, opening his eyes, he beheld the figure of the anchorite, wild and savage-looking as we have described him, standing by his bedside, and pressing his right hand upon his breast, while he held a small silver lamp in the other.

‘Be silent,’ said the hermit, as the prostrate knight looked up in surprise; ‘I have that to say to you which yonder infidel must not hear.’

These words he spoke in the French language, and not in the *lingua franca*, or compound of Eastern and European dialects, which had hitherto been used amongst them.

‘Arise,’ he continued, ‘put on thy mantle; speak not, but tread lightly, and follow me.’

Sir Kenneth arose and took his sword.

‘It needs not,’ answered the anchorite, in a whisper; ‘we are going where spiritual arms avail much, and fleshly weapons are but as the reed and the decayed gourd.’

The knight deposited his sword by the bedside as before, and, armed only with his dagger, from which in this perilous country he never parted, prepared to attend his mysterious host.

The hermit then moved slowly forwards, and was followed by the knight, still under some uncertainty whether the dark form which glided on before to show him the path was not, in fact, the creation of a disturbed dream. They passed, like shadows, into the outer apartment, without disturbing the paynim emir, who lay still buried in repose. Before the cross and altar, in the outward room, a lamp was still burning, a

missal was displayed, and on the floor lay a discipline or penitential scourge of small cord and wire, the lashes of which were recently stained with blood — a token, no doubt, of the severe penance of the recluse. Here Theodorick kneeled down, and pointed to the knight to take his place beside him upon the sharp flints, which seemed placed for the purpose of rendering the posture of reverential devotion as uneasy as possible; he read many prayers of the Catholic Church, and chanted, in a low but earnest voice, three of the penitential psalms. These last he intermixed with sighs, and tears, and convulsive throbs, which bore witness how deeply he felt the divine poetry which he recited. The Scottish knight assisted with profound sincerity at these acts of devotion, his opinions of his host beginning, in the meantime, to be so much changed that he doubted whether, from the severity of his penance and the ardour of his prayers, he ought not to regard him as a saint; and when they arose from the ground, he stood with reverence before him, as a pupil before an honoured master. The hermit was on his side silent and abstracted for the space of a few minutes.

‘Look into yonder recess, my son,’ he said, pointing to the farther corner of the cell; ‘there thou wilt find a veil — bring it hither.’

The knight obeyed; and, in a small aperture cut out of the wall, and secured with a door of wicker, he found the veil inquired for. When he brought it to the light, he discovered that it was torn, and soiled in some places with some dark substance. The anchorite looked at it with a deep but smothered emotion, and, ere he could speak to the Scottish knight, was compelled to vent his feelings in a convulsive groan.

‘Thou art now about to look upon the richest treasure that the earth possesses,’ he at length said; ‘woe is me, that my eyes are unworthy to be lifted towards it! Alas! I am but the vile and despised sign, which points out to the wearied traveller a harbour of rest and security, but must itself remain for ever without doors. In vain have I fled to the very depths of the rocks and the very bosom of the thirsty desert. Mine enemy hath found me — even he whom I have denied has pursued me to my fortresses!’

He paused again for a moment, and turning to the Scottish knight, said, in a firmer tone of voice, ‘You bring me a greeting from Richard of England?’

‘I come from the council of Christian princes,’ said the



knight; 'but the King of England being indisposed, I am not honoured with his Majesty's commands.'

'Your token?' demanded the recluse.

Sir Kenneth hesitated; former suspicions, and the marks of insanity which the hermit had formerly exhibited, rushed suddenly on his thoughts; but how suspect a man whose manners were so saintly? 'My password,' he said at length, is this — "Kings begged of a beggar."

'It is right,' said the hermit, while he paused; 'I know you well, but the sentinel upon his post — and mine is an important one — challenges friend as well as foe.'

He then moved forward with the lamp, leading the way into the room which they had left. The Saracen lay on his couch, still fast asleep. The hermit paused by his side and looked down on him.

'He sleeps,' he said, 'in darkness, and must not be awakened.'

The attitude of the Emir did indeed convey the idea of profound repose. One arm, flung across his body, as he lay with his face half turned to the wall, concealed, with its loose and long sleeve, the greater part of his face; but the high forehead was yet visible. Its nerves, which during his waking hours were so uncommonly active, were now motionless, as if the face had been composed of dark marble, and his long silken eyelashes closed over his piercing and hawk-like eyes. The open and relaxed hand, and the deep, regular, and soft breathing, gave all tokens of the most profound repose. The slumberer formed a singular group along with the tall forms of the hermit in his shaggy dress of goat-skins, bearing the lamp, and the knight in his close leathern coat; the former with an austere expression of ascetic gloom, the latter with anxious curiosity deeply impressed on his manly features.

'He sleeps soundly,' said the hermit, in the same low tone as before, and repeating the words, though he had changed the meaning from that which is literal to a metaphorical sense — 'he sleeps in darkness, but there shall be for him a dayspring. O, Ilderim, thy waking thoughts are yet as vain and wild as those which are wheeling their giddy dance through thy sleeping brain; but the trumpet shall be heard, and the dream shall be dissolved.'

So saying, and making the knight a sign to follow him, the hermit went towards the altar, and, passing behind it, pressed a spring, which, opening without noise, showed a small iron

door wrought in the side of the cavern, so as to be almost imperceptible, unless upon the most severe scrutiny. The hermit, ere he ventured fully to open the door, dropt some oil on the hinges, which the lamp supplied. A small staircase, hewn in the rock, was discovered when the iron door was at length completely opened.

‘Take the veil which I hold,’ said the hermit, in a melancholy tone, ‘and blind mine eyes; for I may not look on the treasure which thou art presently to behold, without sin and presumption.’

Without reply, the knight hastily muffled the recluse’s head in the veil, and the latter began to ascend the staircase as one too much accustomed to the way to require the use of light, while at the same time he held the lamp to the Scot, who followed him for many steps up the narrow ascent. At length they rested in a small vault of irregular form, in one nook of which the staircase terminated, while in another corner a corresponding stair was seen to continue the ascent. In a third angle was a Gothic door, very rudely ornamented with the usual attributes of clustered columns and carving, and defended by a wicket, strongly guarded with iron, and studded with large nails. To this last point the hermit directed his steps, which seemed to falter as he approached it.

‘Put off thy shoes,’ he said to his attendant; ‘the ground on which thou standest is holy. Banish from thy innermost heart each profane and carnal thought, for to harbour such while in this place were a deadly impiety.’

The knight laid aside his shoes as he was commanded, and the hermit stood in the meanwhile as if communing with his soul in secret prayer, and when he again moved, commanded the knight to knock at the wicket three times. He did so. The door opened spontaneously, at least Sir Kenneth beheld no one, and his senses were at once assailed by a stream of the purest light, and by a strong and almost oppressive sense of the richest perfumes. He stepped two or three paces back, and it was the space of a minute ere he recovered the dazzling and overpowering effects of the sudden change from darkness to light.

When he entered the apartment in which this brilliant lustre was displayed, he perceived that the light proceeded from a combination of silver lamps, fed with purest oil, and sending forth the richest odours, hanging by silver chains from the roof of a small Gothic chapel, hewn, like most part of the hermit’s singular mansion, out of the sound and solid rock. But,

whereas, in every other place which Sir Kenneth had seen, the labour employed upon the rock had been of the simplest and coarsest description, it had in this chapel employed the invention and the chisels of the most able architects. The groined roofs rose from six columns on each side, carved with the rarest skill; and the manner in which the crossings of the concave arches were bound together, as it were, with appropriate ornaments, was all in the finest tone of the architecture and of the age. Corresponding to the line of pillars, there were on each side six richly wrought niches, each of which contained the image of one of the twelve apostles.

At the upper and eastern end of the chapel stood the altar, behind which a very rich curtain of Persian silk, embroidered deeply with gold, covered a recess, containing, unquestionably, some image or relic of no ordinary sanctity, in honour of whom this singular place of worship had been erected. Under the persuasion that this must be the case, the knight advanced to the shrine, and, kneeling down before it, repeated his devotions with fervency, during which his attention was disturbed by the curtain being suddenly raised, or rather pulled aside, how or by whom he saw not; but in the niche which was thus disclosed he beheld a cabinet of silver and ebony, with a double folding-door, the whole formed into the miniature resemblance of a Gothic church.

As he gazed with anxious curiosity on the shrine, the two folding-doors also flew open, discovering a large piece of wood, on which were blazoned the words 'VERA CRUX,' at the same time a choir of female voices sung *Gloria Patri*. The instant the strain had ceased, the shrine was closed and the curtain again drawn, and the knight who knelt at the altar might now continue his devotions undisturbed in honour of the holy relic which had been just disclosed to his view. He did this under the profound impression of one who had witnessed, with his own eyes, an awful evidence of the truth of his religion, and it was some time ere, concluding his orisons, he arose and ventured to look around him for the hermit, who had guided him to this sacred and mysterious spot. He beheld him, his head still muffled in the veil which he had himself wrapped around it, couching, like a rated hound, upon the threshold of the chapel, but, apparently, without venturing to cross it: the holiest reverence, the most penitential remorse was expressed by his posture, which seemed that of a man borne down and crushed to the earth by the burden of his inward feelings. It

seemed to the Scot that only the sense of the deepest penitence, remorse, and humiliation could have thus prostrated a frame so strong and a spirit so fiery.

He approached him as if to speak, but the recluse anticipated his purpose, murmuring in stifled tones from beneath the fold in which his head was muffled, and which sounded like a voice proceeding from the cerements of a corpse — ‘Abide — abide ; happy thou that mayst — the vision is not yet ended.’ So saying, he reared himself from the ground, drew back from the threshold on which he had hitherto lain prostrate, and closed the door of the chapel, which, secured by a spring-bolt within, the snap of which resounded through the place, appeared so much like a part of the living rock from which the cavern was hewn that Kenneth could hardly discern where the aperture had been. He was now alone in the lighted chapel, which contained the relic to which he had lately rendered his homage, without other arms than his dagger, or other companion than his pious thoughts and dauntless courage.

Uncertain what was next to happen, but resolved to abide the course of events, Sir Kenneth paced the solitary chapel till about the time of the earliest cock-crowing. At this dead season, when night and morning met together, he heard, but from what quarter he could not discover, the sound of such a small silver bell as is rung at the elevation of the host, in the ceremony, or sacrifice, as it has been called, of the mass. The hour and the place rendered the sound fearfully solemn, and, bold as he was, the knight withdrew himself into the farther nook of the chapel, at the end opposite to the altar, in order to observe, without interruption, the consequences of this unexpected signal.

He did not wait long ere the silken curtain was again withdrawn, and the relic again presented to his view. As he sunk reverentially on his knee, he heard the sound of the lauds, or earliest office of the Catholic Church, sung by female voices, which united together in the performance as they had done in the former service. The knight was soon aware that the voices were no longer stationary in the distance, but approached the chapel and became louder, when a door, imperceptible when closed, like that by which he had himself entered, opened on the other side of the vault, and gave the tones of the choir more room to swell along the ribbed arches of the roof.

The knight fixed his eyes on the opening with breathless anxiety, and, continuing to kneel in the attitude of devotion



which the place and scene required, expected the consequence of these preparations. A procession appeared about to issue from the door. First, four beautiful boys, whose arms, neck, and legs were bare, showing the bronze complexion of the East, and contrasting with the snow-white tunics which they wore, entered the chapel by two and two. The first pair bore censers, which they swung from side to side, adding double fragrance to the odours with which the chapel already was impregnated. The second pair scattered flowers.

After these followed, in due and majestic order, the females who composed the choir — six who, from their black scapularies and black veils over their white garments, appeared to be professed nuns of the order of Mount Carmel, and as many whose veils, being white, argued them to be novices, or occasional inhabitants in the cloister, who were not as yet bound to it by vows. The former held in their hands large rosaries, while the younger and lighter figures who followed carried each a chaplet of red and white roses. They moved in procession around the chapel without appearing to take the slightest notice of Kenneth, although passing so near him that their robes almost touched him; while they continued to sing, the knight doubted not that he was in one of those cloisters where the noble Christian maidens had formerly openly devoted themselves to the services of the church. Most of them had been suppressed since the Mahometans had reconquered Palestine, but many, purchasing connivance by presents, or receiving it from the clemency or contempt of the victors, still continued to observe in private the ritual to which their vows had consecrated them. Yet, though Kenneth knew this to be the case, the solemnity of the place and hour, the surprise at the sudden appearance of these votresses, and the visionary manner in which they moved past him, had such influence on his imagination, that he could scarce conceive that the fair procession which he beheld was formed of creatures of this world, so much did they resemble a choir of supernatural beings rendering homage to the universal object of adoration.

Such was the knight's first idea, as the procession passed him, scarce moving, save just sufficiently to continue their progress; so that, seen by the shadowy and religious light which the lamps shed through the clouds of incense which darkened the apartment, they appeared rather to glide than to walk.

But as a second time, in surrounding the chapel, they passed the spot on which he kneeled, one of the white-stoled maidens,



as she glided by him, detached from the chaplet which she carried a rosebud, which dropped from her fingers, perhaps unconsciously, on the foot of Sir Kenneth. The knight started as if a dart had suddenly struck his person ; for, when the mind is wound up to a high pitch of feeling and expectation, the slightest incident, if unexpected, gives fire to the train which imagination has already laid. But he suppressed his emotion, recollecting how easily an incident so indifferent might have happened, and that it was only the uniform monotony of the movement of the choristers which made the incident in the slightest degree remarkable.

Still, while the procession for the third time surrounded the chapel, the thoughts and the eyes of Kenneth followed exclusively the one among the novices who had dropped the rosebud. Her step, her face, her form were so completely assimilated to the rest of the choristers, that it was impossible to perceive the least marks of individuality, and yet Kenneth's heart throbbed like a bird that would burst from its cage, as if to assure him, by its sympathetic suggestions, that the female who held the right file on the second rank of the novices was dearer to him, not only than all the rest that were present, but than the whole sex besides. The romantic passion of love, as it was cherished, and indeed enjoined, by the rules of chivalry, associated well with the no less romantic feelings of devotion ; and they might be said much more to enhance than to counteract each other. It was, therefore, with a glow of expectation that had something even of a religious character that Sir Kenneth, his sensations thrilling from his heart to the ends of his fingers, expected some second sign of the presence of one who, he strongly fancied, had already bestowed on him the first. Short as the space was during which the procession again completed a third perambulation of the chapel, it seemed an eternity to Kenneth. At length the form which he had watched with such devoted attention drew nigh ; there was no difference betwixt that shrouded figure and the others with whom it moved in concert and in unison, until, just as she passed for the third time the kneeling Crusader, a part of a little and well-proportioned hand, so beautifully formed as to give the highest idea of the perfect proportions of the form to which it belonged, stole through the folds of the gauze, like a moonbeam through the fleecy cloud of a summer night, and again a rosebud lay at the feet of the Knight of the Leopard.

This second intimation could not be accidental : it could not

be fortuitous — the resemblance of that half-seen, but beautiful, female hand with one which his lips had once touched, and, while they touched it, had internally sworn allegiance to the lovely owner. Had farther proof been wanting, there was the glimmer of that matchless ruby ring on that snow-white finger, whose invaluable worth Kenneth would yet have prized less than the slightest sign which that finger could have made; and, veiled too, as she was, he might see, by chance or by favour, a stray curl of the dark tresses, each hair of which was dearer to him a hundred times than a chain of massive gold. It was the lady of his love! But that she should be here, in the savage and sequestered desert, among vestals who rendered themselves habitants of wilds and of caverns that they might perform in secret those Christian rites which they dared not assist in openly — that this should be so, in truth and in reality, seemed too incredible: it must be a dream — a delusive trance of the imagination. While these thoughts passed through the mind of Kenneth, the same passage by which the procession had entered the chapel received them on their return. The young sacristans, the sable nuns vanished successively through the open door; at length she from whom he had received this double intimation passed also; yet, in passing, turned her head, slightly indeed, but perceptibly, towards the place where he remained fixed as an image. He marked the last wave of her veil; it was gone — and a darkness sunk upon his soul, scarce less palpable than that which almost immediately enveloped his external sense; for the last chorister had no sooner crossed the threshold of the door than it shut with a loud sound, and at the same instant the voices of the choir were silent, the lights of the chapel were at once extinguished, and Sir Kenneth remained solitary and in total darkness. But to Kenneth solitude and darkness, and the uncertainty of his mysterious situation, were as nothing: he thought not of them — cared not for them — cared for nought in the world save the flitting vision which had just glided past him, and the tokens of her favour which she had bestowed. To grope on the floor for the buds which she had dropped — to press them to his lips — to his bosom — now alternately, now together — to rivet his lips to the cold stones on which, as near as he could judge, she had so lately stepped — to play all the extravagances which strong affection suggests and vindicates to those who yield themselves up to it, were but the tokens of passionate love common to all ages. But it was peculiar to the times of chivalry, that in his

wildest rapture the knight imagined of no attempt to follow or to trace the object of such romantic attachment; that he thought of her as of a deity, who, having deigned to show herself for an instant to her devoted worshipper, had again returned to the darkness of her sanctuary, or as an influential planet, which, having darted in some auspicious minute one favourable ray, wrapped itself again in its veil of mist. The motions of the lady of his love were to him those of a superior being, who was to move without watch or control, rejoice him by her appearance or depress him by her absence, animate him by her kindness or drive him to despair by her cruelty — all at her own free-will, and without other importunity or remonstrance than that expressed by the most devoted services of the heart and sword of the champion, whose sole object in life was to fulfil her commands, and, by the splendour of his own achievements, to exalt her fame.

Such were the rules of chivalry, and of the love which was its ruling principle. But Sir Kenneth's attachment was rendered romantic by other and still more peculiar circumstances. He had never even heard the sound of his lady's voice, though he had often beheld her beauty with rapture. She moved in a circle which his rank of knighthood permitted him indeed to approach, but not to mingle with; and highly as he stood distinguished for warlike skill and enterprise, still the poor Scottish soldier was compelled to worship his divinity at a distance almost as great as divides the Persian from the sun which he adores. But when was the pride of woman too lofty to overlook the passionate devotion of a lover, however inferior in degree? Her eye had been on him in the tournament, her ear had heard his praises in the report of the battles which were daily fought; and while count, duke, and lord contended for her grace, it flowed, unwillingly perhaps at first, or even unconsciously, towards the poor Knight of the Leopard, who, to support his rank, had little besides his sword. When she looked, and when she listened, the lady saw and heard enough to encourage her in a partiality which had at first crept on her unawares. If a knight's personal beauty was praised, even the most prudish dames of the military court of England would make an exception in favour of the Scottish Kenneth; and it oftentimes happened that, notwithstanding the very considerable largesses which princes and peers bestowed on the minstrels, an impartial spirit of independence would seize the poet, and the harp was swept to the heroism of one who had neither palfreys nor garments to bestow in guerdon of his applause.

The moments when she listened to the praises of her lover became gradually more and more dear to the high-born Edith, relieving the flattery with which her ear was weary, and presenting to her a subject of secret contemplation, more worthy, as he seemed by general report, than those who surpassed him in rank and in the gifts of fortune. As her attention became constantly, though cautiously, fixed on Sir Kenneth, she grew more and more convinced of his personal devotion to herself, and more and more certain in her mind that in Kenneth of Scotland she beheld the fated knight doomed to share with her through weal and woe—and the prospect looked gloomy and dangerous—the passionate attachment to which the poets of the age ascribed such universal dominion, and which its manners and morals placed nearly on the same rank with devotion itself.

Let us not disguise the truth from our readers. When Edith became aware of the state of her own sentiments, chivalrous as were her sentiments, becoming a maiden not distant from the throne of England, gratified as her pride must have been with the mute though unceasing homage rendered to her by the knight whom she had distinguished, there were moments when the feelings of the woman, loving and beloved, murmured against the restraints of state and form by which she was surrounded, and when she almost blamed the timidity of her lover, who seemed resolved not to infringe them. The etiquette, to use a modern phrase, of birth and rank had drawn around her a magical circle, beyond which Sir Kenneth might indeed bow and gaze, but within which he could no more pass than an evoked spirit can transgress the boundaries prescribed by the rod of a powerful enchanter. The thought involuntarily pressed on her, that she herself must venture, were it but the point of her fairy foot, beyond the prescribed boundary, if she ever hoped to give a lover so reserved and bashful an opportunity of so slight a favour as but to salute her shoe-tie. There was an example, the noted precedent of the 'king's daughter of Hungary,' who thus generously encouraged the 'squire of low degree'; and Edith, though of kingly blood, was no king's daughter, any more than her lover was of low degree: fortune had put no such extreme barrier in obstacle to their affections. Something, however, within the maiden's bosom—that modest pride which throws fetters even on love itself—forbade her, notwithstanding the superiority of her condition, to make those advances which, in every case, delicacy assigns to the other sex; above all, Sir Kenneth was a knight so gentle and honour-



able, so highly accomplished, as her imagination at least suggested, together with the strictest feelings of what was due to himself and to her, that, however constrained her attitude might be while receiving his adorations, like the image of some deity, who is neither supposed to feel nor to reply to the homage of its votaries, still the idol feared that to step prematurely from her pedestal would be to degrade herself in the eyes of her devoted worshipper.

Yet the devout adorer of an actual idol can even discover signs of approbation in the rigid and immovable features of a marble image, and it is no wonder that something, which could be as favourably interpreted, glanced from the bright eye of the lovely Edith, whose beauty, indeed, consisted rather more in that very power of expression than on absolute regularity of contour or brilliancy of complexion. Some slight marks of distinction had escaped from her, notwithstanding her own jealous vigilance, else how could Sir Kenneth have so readily, and so undoubtedly, recognised the lovely hand, of which scarce two fingers were visible from under the veil, or how could he have rested so thoroughly assured that two flowers, successively dropt on the spot, were intended as a recognition on the part of his lady love? By what train of observation, by what secret signs, looks, or gestures, by what instinctive freemasonry of love, this degree of intelligence came to subsist between Edith and her lover, we cannot attempt to trace; for we are old, and such slight vestiges of affection, quickly discovered by younger eyes, defy the power of ours. Enough, that such affection did subsist between parties who had never even spoken to one another, though, on the side of Edith, it was checked by a deep sense of the difficulties and dangers which must necessarily attend the further progress of their attachment, and upon that of the knight by a thousand doubts and fears, lest he had over-estimated the slight tokens of the lady's notice, varied, as they necessarily were, by long intervals of apparent coldness, during which either the fear of exciting the observation of others, and thus drawing danger upon her lover, or that of sinking in his esteem by seeming too willing to be won, made her behave with indifference, and as if unobservant of his presence.

This narrative, tedious perhaps, but which the story renders necessary, may serve to explain the state of intelligence, if it deserves so strong a name, betwixt the lovers, when Edith's unexpected appearance in the chapel produced so powerful an effect on the feelings of her knight.



## CHAPTER V

Their necromantic forms in vain  
Haunt us on the tented plain ;  
We bid these spectre shapes avaunt,  
Ashtaroth and Termagaunt.

WARTON.

THE most profound silence, the deepest darkness continued to brood for more than an hour over the chapel in which we left the Knight of the Leopard still kneeling, alternately expressing thanks to Heaven and gratitude to his lady, for the boon which had been vouchsafed to him. His own safety, his own destiny, for which he was at all times little anxious, had not now the weight of a grain of dust in his reflections. He was in the neighbourhood of Lady Edith, he had received tokens of her grace, he was in a place hallowed by relics of the most awful sanctity. A Christian soldier, a devoted lover could fear nothing, think of nothing, but his duty to Heaven and his devoir to his lady.

At the lapse of the space of time which we have noticed, a shrill whistle, like that with which a falconer calls his hawk, was heard to ring sharply through the vaulted chapel. It was a sound ill suited to the place, and reminded Sir Kenneth how necessary it was he should be upon his guard. He started from his knee, and laid his hand upon his poniard. A creaking sound, as of a screw or pulleys, succeeded, and a light streaming upwards, as from an opening in the floor, showed that a trap-door had been raised or depressed. In less than a minute, a long skinny arm, partly naked, partly clothed in a sleeve of red samite, arose out of the aperture, holding a lamp as high as it could stretch upwards, and the figure to which the arm belonged ascended step by step to the level of the chapel floor. The form and face of the being who thus presented himself were those of a frightful dwarf, with a large head, a cap fantastically adorned with three peacock-feathers, a dress of red samite,

the richness of which rendered his ugliness more conspicuous, distinguished by gold bracelets and armlets, and a white silk sash, in which he wore a gold-hilted dagger. This singular figure had in his left hand a kind of broom. So soon as he had stepped from the aperture through which he arose, he stood still, and, as if to show himself more distinctly, moved the lamp which he held slowly over his face and person, successively illuminating his wild and fantastic features, and his misshapen, but nervous, limbs. Though disproportioned in person, the dwarf was not so distorted as to argue any want of strength or activity. While Sir Kenneth gazed on this disagreeable object, the popular creed occurred to his remembrance, concerning the gnomes, or earthly spirits, which make their abode in the caverns of the earth; and so much did this figure correspond with ideas he had formed of their appearance, that he looked on it with disgust, mingled not indeed with fear, but that sort of awe which the presence of a supernatural creature may infuse into the most steady bosom.

The dwarf again whistled, and summoned from beneath a companion. This second figure ascended in the same manner as the first; but it was a female arm, in this second instance, which upheld the lamp from the subterranean vault out of which these presentments arose, and it was a female form much resembling the first in shape and proportions which slowly emerged from the floor. Her dress was also of red samite, fantastically cut and flounced, as if she had been dressed for some exhibition of mimes or jugglers; and with the same minuteness which her predecessor had exhibited, she passed the lamp over her face and person, which seemed to rival the male's in ugliness. But, with all this most unfavourable exterior, there was one trait in the features of both which argued alertness and intelligence in the most uncommon degree. This arose from the brilliancy of their eyes, which, deep-set beneath black and shaggy brows, gleamed with a lustre which, like that in the eye of the toad, seemed to make some amends for the extreme ugliness of countenance and person.

Sir Kenneth remained as if spellbound, while this unlovely pair, moving round the chapel close to each other, appeared to perform the duty of sweeping it, like menials; but, as they used only one hand, the floor was not much benefited by the exercise, which they plied with such oddity of gestures and manner as befitted their bizarre and fantastic appearance. When they approached near to the knight, in the course of

their occupation, they ceased to use their brooms, and placing themselves side by side, directly opposite to Sir Kenneth, they again slowly shifted the lights which they held, so as to allow him distinctly to survey features which were not rendered more agreeable by being brought nearer, and to observe the extreme quickness and keenness with which their black and glittering eyes flashed back the light of the lamps. They then turned the gleam of both lights upon the knight, and having accurately surveyed him, turned their faces to each other, and set up a loud yelling laugh, which resounded in his ears. The sound was so ghastly, that Sir Kenneth started at hearing it, and hastily demanded, in the name of God, who they were who profaned that holy place with such antic gestures and elritch exclamations.

‘I am the dwarf Nectabanus,’ said the abortion-seeming male, in a voice corresponding to his figure, and resembling the voice of the night-crow more than any sound which is heard by daylight.

‘And I am Guenevra, his lady and his love,’ replied the female, in tones which, being shriller, were yet wilder than those of her companion.

‘Wherefore are you here?’ again demanded the knight, scarcely yet assured that it was human beings which he saw before him.

‘I am,’ replied the male dwarf, with much assumed gravity and dignity, ‘the twelfth imaum—I am Mohammed Mohadi, the guide and the conductor of the faithful. An hundred horses stand ready saddled for me and my train at the Holy City, and as many at the City of Refuge. I am he who shall bear witness, and this is one of my hours.’

‘Thou liest,’ answered the female, interrupting her companion, in tones yet shriller than his own: ‘I am none of thy hours, and thou art no such infidel trash as the Mohammed of whom thou speakest. May my curse rest upon his coffin! I tell thee, thou ass of Issachar, thou art King Arthur of Britain, whom the fairies stole away from the field of Avalon; and I am Dame Guenevra, famed for her beauty.’

‘But, in truth, noble sir,’ said the male, ‘we are distressed princes, dwelling under the wing of King Guy of Jerusalem, until he was driven out from his own nest by the foul infidels—Heaven’s bolts consume them!’

‘Hush,’ said a voice from the side upon which the knight had entered—‘hush, fools, and begone; your ministry is ended.’

The dwarfs had no sooner heard the command than, gibber-

ing in discordant whispers to each other, they blew out their lights at once, and left the knight in utter darkness, which, when the pattering of their retiring feet had died away, was soon accompanied by its fittest companion, total silence.

The knight felt the departure of these unfortunate creatures a relief. He could not, from their language, manners, and appearance, doubt that they belonged to the degraded class of beings whom deformity of person and weakness of intellect recommended to the painful situation of appendages to great families, where their personal appearance and inbecility were food for merriment to the household. Superior in no respect to the ideas and manners of his time, the Scottish knight might, at another period, have been much amused by the mummery of these poor effigies of humanity; but now their appearance, gesticulations, and language broke the train of deep and solemn feeling with which he was impressed, and he rejoiced in the disappearance of the unhappy objects.

A few minutes after they had retired, the door at which they [the knight] had entered opened slowly, and, remaining ajar, discovered a faint light arising from a lantern placed upon the threshold. Its doubtful and wavering gleam showed a dark form reclined beside the entrance, but without its precincts, which, on approaching it more nearly, he recognised to be the hermit, couching in the same humble posture in which he had at first laid himself down, and which doubtless he had retained during the whole time of his guest's continuing in the chapel.

'All is over,' said the hermit, as he heard the knight approaching, 'and the most wretched of earthly sinners, with him who should think himself most honoured and most happy among the race of humanity, must retire from this place. Take the light, and guide me down the descent, for I may not uncover my eyes until I am far from this hallowed spot.'

The Scottish knight obeyed in silence, for a solemn and yet ecstatic sense of what he had seen had silenced even the eager workings of curiosity. He led the way, with considerable accuracy, through the various secret passages and stairs by which they had ascended, until at length they found themselves in the outward cell of the hermit's cavern.

'The condemned criminal is restored to his dungeon, reprieved from one miserable day to another, until his awful Judge shall at length appoint the well-deserved sentence to be carried into execution.'

As the hermit spoke these words, he laid aside the veil with

which his eyes had been bound, and looked at it with a suppressed and hollow sigh. No sooner had he restored it to the crypt from which he had caused the Scot to bring it than he said hastily and sternly to his companion — ‘Begone — begone ! to rest — to rest ! You may sleep — you can sleep ; I neither can nor may.’

Respecting the profound agitation with which this was spoken, the knight retired into the inner cell ; but, casting back his eye as he left the exterior grotto, he beheld the anchorite stripping his shoulders with frantic haste of their shaggy mantle, and ere he could shut the frail door which separated the two compartments of the cavern, he heard the clang of the scourge, and the groans of the penitent under his self-inflicted penance. A cold shudder came over the knight as he reflected what could be the foulness of the sin, what the depth of the remorse, which, apparently, such severe penance could neither cleanse nor assuage. He told his beads devoutly, and flung himself on his rude couch, after a glance at the still sleeping Moslem, and, wearied by the various scenes of the day and the night, soon slept as sound as infancy. Upon his awaking in the morning, he held certain conferences with the hermit upon matters of importance, and the result of their intercourse induced him to remain for two days longer in the grotto. He was regular, as became a pilgrim, in his devotional exercises, but was not again admitted to the chapel in which he had seen such wonders.



## CHAPTER VI

Now change the scene — and let the trumpets sound,  
For we must rouse the lion from his lair.

*Old Play.*

THE scene must change, as our programme has announced, from the mountain wilderness of Jordan to the camp of King Richard of England, then stationed betwixt Jean d'Acre and Ascalon, and containing that army with which he of the Lion Heart had promised himself a triumphant march to Jerusalem, and in which he would probably have succeeded, if not hindered by the jealousies of the Christian princes engaged in the same enterprise, and the offence taken by them at the uncurbed haughtiness of the English monarch, and Richard's unveiled contempt for his brother sovereigns, who, his equals in rank, were yet far his inferiors in courage, hardihood, and military talents. Such discords, and particularly those betwixt Richard and Philip of France, created disputes and obstacles which impeded every active measure proposed by the heroic though impetuous Richard, while the ranks of the Crusaders were daily thinned not only by the desertion of individuals, but of entire bands, headed by their respective feudal leaders, who withdrew from a contest in which they had ceased to hope for success.

The effects of the climate became, as usual, fatal to soldiers from the north, and the more so, that the dissolute license of the Crusaders, forming a singular contrast to the principles and purpose of their taking up arms, rendered them more easy victims to the insalubrious influence of burning heat and chilling dews. To these discouraging causes of loss was to be added the sword of the enemy. Saladin, than whom no greater name is recorded in Eastern history, had learnt to his fatal experience that his light-armed followers were little able to meet in close encounter with the ironclad Franks, and had been taught, at the same time, to apprehend and dread the adventurous char-

acter of his antagonist Richard. But, if his armies were more than once routed with great slaughter, his numbers gave the Saracen the advantage in those lighter skirmishes of which many were inevitable.

As the army of his assailants decreased, the enterprises of the Sultan became more numerous and more bold in this species of petty warfare. The camp of the Crusaders was surrounded, and almost besieged, by clouds of light cavalry, resembling swarms of wasps, easily crushed when they are once grasped, but furnished with wings to elude superior strength and stings to inflict harm and mischief. There was perpetual warfare of posts and foragers, in which many valuable lives were lost, without any corresponding object being gained; convoys were intercepted, and communications were cut off. The Crusaders had to purchase the means of sustaining life by life itself; and water, like that of the well of Bethlehem, longed for by King David, one of its ancient monarchs, was then, as before, only obtained by the expenditure of blood.

These evils were, in a great measure, counterbalanced by the stern resolution and restless activity of King Richard, who, with some of his best knights, was ever on horseback, ready to repair to any point where danger occurred, and often not only bringing unexpected succour to the Christians, but discomfiting the infidels when they seemed most secure of victory. But even the iron frame of Cœur-de-Lion could not support, without injury, the alternations of the unwholesome climate, joined to ceaseless exertions of body and mind. He became afflicted with one of those slow and wasting fevers peculiar to Asia, and, in despite of his great strength, and still greater courage, grew first unfit to mount on horseback, and then unable to attend the councils of war, which were, from time to time, held by the Crusaders. It was difficult to say whether this state of personal inactivity was rendered more galling or more endurable to the English monarch by the resolution of the council to engage in a truce of thirty days with the Sultan Saladin; for, on the one hand, if he was incensed at the delay which this interposed to the progress of the great enterprise, he was, on the other, somewhat consoled by knowing that others were not acquiring laurels while he remained inactive upon a sick-bed.

That, however, which Cœur-de-Lion could least excuse was the general inactivity which prevailed in the camp of the Crusaders so soon as his illness assumed a serious aspect; and the reports which he extracted from his unwilling attendants

gave him to understand that the hopes of the host had abated in proportion to his illness, and that the interval of truce was employed, not in recruiting their numbers, reanimating their courage, fostering their spirit of conquest, and preparing for a speedy and determined advance upon the Holy City, which was the object of their expedition, but in securing the camp occupied by their diminished followers with trenches, palisades, and other fortifications, as if preparing rather to repel an attack from a powerful enemy so soon as hostilities should recommence than to assume the proud character of conquerors and assailants.

The English king chafed under these reports, like the imprisoned lion viewing his prey from the iron barriers of his cage. Naturally rash and impetuous, the irritability of his temper preyed on itself. He was dreaded by his attendants, and even the medical assistants feared to assume the necessary authority which a physician, to do justice to his patient, must needs exercise over him. One faithful baron, who, perhaps from the congenial nature of his disposition, was devoutly attached to the King's person, dared alone to come between the dragon and his wrath, and quietly, but firmly, maintained a control which no other dared assume over the dangerous invalid, and which Thomas de Multon only exercised because he esteemed his sovereign's life and honour more than he did the degree of favour which he might lose, or even the risk which he might incur, in nursing a patient so intractable, and whose displeasure was so perilous.

Sir Thomas was the Lord of Gilsland, in Cumberland, and, in an age when surnames and titles were not distinctly attached, as now, to the individuals who bore them, he was called by the Normans the Lord de Vaux, and in English, by the Saxons, who clung to their native language, and were proud of the share of Saxon blood in this renowned warrior's veins, he was termed Thomas, or, more familiarly, Thom, of the Gills, or Narrow Valleys, from which his extensive domains derived their well-known appellation.

This chief had been exercised in almost all the wars, whether waged betwixt England and Scotland or amongst the various domestic factions which then tore the former country asunder, and in all had been distinguished as well from his military conduct as his personal prowess. He was, in other respects, a rude soldier, blunt and careless in his bearing, and taciturn, nay, almost sullen, in his habits of society, and seeming, at

least, to disclaim all knowledge of policy and of courtly art. There were men, however, who pretended to look deeply into character, who asserted that the Lord de Vaux was not less shrewd and aspiring than he was blunt and bold, and who thought that, while he assimilated himself to the King's own character of blunt hardihood, it was, in some degree at least, with an eye to establish his favour, and to gratify his own hopes of deep-laid ambition. But no one cared to thwart his schemes, if such he had, by rivalling him in the dangerous occupation of daily attendance on the sick-bed of a patient whose disease was pronounced infectious, and more especially when it was remembered that the patient was Cœur-de-Lion, suffering under all the furious impatience of a soldier withheld from battle, and a sovereign sequestered from authority ; and the common soldiers, at least in the English army, were generally of opinion that De Vaux attended on the King like comrade upon comrade, in the honest and disinterested frankness of military friendship, contracted between the partakers of daily dangers.

It was on the decline of a Syrian day that Richard lay on his couch of sickness, loathing it as much in mind as his illness made it irksome to his body. His bright blue eye, which at all times shone with uncommon keenness and splendour, had its vivacity augmented by fever and mental impatience, and glanced from among his curled and unshorn locks of yellow hair as fitfully and as vividly as the last gleams of the sun shoot through the clouds of an approaching thunderstorm, which still, however, are gilded by its beams. His manly features showed the progress of wasting illness, and his beard, neglected and untrimmed, had overgrown both lips and chin. Casting himself from side to side, now clutching towards him the coverings, which at the next moment he flung as impatiently from him, his tossed couch and impatient gestures showed at once the energy and the reckless impatience of a disposition whose natural sphere was that of the most active exertion.

Beside his couch stood Thomas de Vaux, in face, attitude, and manner the strongest possible contrast to the suffering monarch. His stature approached the gigantic, and his hair in thickness might have resembled that of Samson, though only after the Israelitish champion's locks had passed under the shears of the Philistines, for those of De Vaux were cut short, that they might be inclosed under his helmet. The light of

his broad, large hazel eye resembled that of the autumn morn, and it was only perturbed for a moment, when, from time to time, it was attracted by Richard's vehement marks of agitation and restlessness. His features, though massive like his person, might have been handsome before they were defaced with scars; his upper lip, after the fashion of the Normans, was covered with thick mustachios, which grew so long and luxuriantly as to mingle with his hair, and, like his hair, were dark brown, slightly brindled with grey. His frame seemed of that kind which most readily defies both toil and climate, for he was thin-flanked, broad-chested, long-armed, deep-breathed, and strong-limbed. He had not laid aside his buff-coat, which displayed the cross cut on the shoulder, for more than three nights, enjoying but such momentary repose as the warder of a sick monarch's couch might by snatches indulge. This baron rarely changed his posture, except to administer to Richard the medicine or refreshments which none of his less favoured attendants could persuade the impatient monarch to take; and there was something affecting in the kindly, yet awkward, manner in which he discharged offices so strangely contrasted with his blunt and soldierly habits and manners.

The pavilion in which these personages were had, as became the time, as well as the personal character of Richard, more of a warlike than a sumptuous or royal character. Weapons, offensive and defensive, several of them of strange and newly-invented construction, were scattered about the tented apartment, or disposed upon the pillars which supported it. Skins of animals slain in the chase were stretched on the ground, or extended along the sides of the pavilion, and, upon a heap of these silvan spoils, lay three *alans*, as they were then called (wolf-greyhounds, that is), of the largest size, and as white as snow. Their faces, marked with many a scar from clutch and fang, showed their share in collecting the trophies upon which they reposed, and their eyes, fixed from time to time with an expressive stretch and yawn upon the bed of Richard, evinced how much they marvelled at and regretted the unwonted inactivity which they were compelled to share. These were but the accompaniments of the soldier and huntsman; but, on a small table close by the bed, was placed a shield of wrought steel, of triangular form, bearing the three lions passant, first assumed by the chivalrous monarch, and before it the golden circlet, resembling much a ducal coronet, only that it



was higher in front than behind, which, with the purple velvet and embroidered tiara that lined it, formed then the emblem of England's sovereignty. Beside it, as if prompt for defending the regal symbol, lay a mighty curtal axe, which would have wearied the arm of any other than Cœur-de-Lion.

In an outer partition of the pavilion waited two or three officers of the royal household, depressed, anxious for their master's health, and not less so for their own safety, in case of his decease. Their gloomy apprehensions spread themselves to the warders without, who paced about in downcast and silent contemplation, or, resting on their halberds, stood motionless on their post, rather like armed trophies than living warriors.

'So thou hast no better news to bring me from without, Sir Thomas?' said the King, after a long and perturbed silence, spent in the feverish agitation which we have endeavoured to describe. 'All our knights turned women, and our ladies become devotees, and neither a spark of valour nor of gallantry to enlighten a camp which contains the choicest of Europe's chivalry — ha!'

'The truce, my lord,' said De Vaux, with the same patience with which he had twenty times repeated the explanation — 'the truce prevents us bearing ourselves as men of action; and, for the ladies, I am no great reveller, as is well known to your Majesty, and seldom exchange steel and buff for velvet and gold, but thus far I know, that our choicest beauties are waiting upon the Queen's Majesty and the Princess to a pilgrimage to the convent of Engaddi, to accomplish their vows for your Highness's deliverance from this trouble.'

'And is it thus,' said Richard, with the impatience of indisposition, 'that royal matrons and maidens should risk themselves, where the dogs who defile the land have as little truth to man as they have faith towards God?'

'Nay, my lord,' said De Vaux, 'they have Saladin's word for their safety.'

'True — true!' replied Richard, 'and I did the heathen soldan injustice; I owe him reparation for it. Would God I were but fit to offer it him upon my body between the two hosts, Christendom and Heathenesse both looking on!'

As Richard spoke, he thrust his right arm out of bed naked to the shoulder, and, painfully raising himself in his couch, shook his clenched hand, as if it grasped sword or battle-axe, and was then brandished over the jewelled turban of the soldan. It was not without a gentle degree of violence, which

the King would scarce have endured from another, that De Vaux, in his character of sick-nurse, compelled his royal master to replace himself in the couch, and covered his sinewy arm, neck, and shoulders with the care which a mother bestows upon an impatient child.

'Thou art a rough nurse, though a willing one, De Vaux,' said the King, laughing with a bitter expression, while he submitted to the strength which he was unable to resist; 'methinks a coif would become thy lowering features as well as a child's biggin would beseem mine. We should be a babe and nurse to frighten girls with!'

'We have frightened men in our time, my liege,' said De Vaux; 'and, I trust, may live to frighten them again. What is a fever-fit, that we should not endure it patiently, in order to get rid of it easily?'

'Fever-fit!' exclaimed Richard, impetuously; 'thou mayst think, and justly, that it is a fever-fit with me; but what is it with all the other Christian princes — with Philip of France, with that dull Austrian, with him of Montserrat, with the Hospitallers, with the Templars — what is it with all them? I will tell thee: it is a cold palsy — a dead lethargy — a disease that deprives them of speech and action — a canker that has eaten into the heart of all that is noble, and chivalrous, and virtuous among them — that has made them false to the noblest vow ever knights were sworn to — has made them indifferent to their fame, and forgetful of their God!'

'For the love of Heaven, my liege,' said De Vaux, 'take it less violently! You will be heard without doors, where such speeches are but too current already among the common soldiery, and engender discord and contention in the Christian host. Bethink you that your illness mars the mainspring of their enterprise: a mangonel will work without screw and lever better than the Christian host without King Richard.'

'Thou flatterest me, De Vaux,' said Richard; and, not insensible to the power of praise, he reclined his head on the pillow with a more deliberate attempt to repose than he had yet exhibited. But Thomas de Vaux was no courtier: the phrase which had offered had risen spontaneously to his lips, and he knew not how to pursue the pleasing theme, so as to soothe and prolong the vein which he had excited. He was silent, therefore, until, relapsing into his moody contemplations, the King demanded of him sharply, 'Despardieux! This is smoothly said to soothe a sick man! But does a league of

monarchs, an assemblage of nobles, a convocation of all the chivalry of Europe droop with the sickness of one man, though he chances to be King of England? Why should Richard's illness, or Richard's death, check the march of thirty thousand men as brave as himself? When the master stag is struck down the herd do not disperse upon his fall; when the falcon strikes the leading crane, another takes the guidance of the phalanx. Why do not the powers assemble and choose some one to whom they may entrust the guidance of the host?'

'Forsooth, and if it please your Majesty,' said De Vaux, 'I hear consultations have been held among the royal leaders for some such purpose.'

'Ha!' exclaimed Richard, his jealousy awakened, giving his mental irritation another direction. 'Am I forgot by my allies ere I have taken the last sacrament? Do they hold me dead already? But no—no, they are right. And whom do they select as leader of the Christian host?'

'Rank and dignity,' said De Vaux, 'point to the King of France.'

'Oh, ay,' answered the English monarch, 'Philip of France and Navarre—Denis Mountjoie—his Most Christian Majesty—mouth-filling words these! There is but one risk, that he might mistake the words *En arrière* for *En avant*, and lead us back to Paris instead of marching to Jerusalem. His politic head has learned by this time that there is more to be gotten by oppressing his feudatories and pillaging his allies than fighting with the Turks for the Holy Sepulchre.'

'They might choose the Archduke of Austria,' said De Vaux.

'What! because he is big and burly like thyself, Thomas—nearly as thick-headed, but without thy indifference to danger and carelessness of offence? I tell thee that Austria has in all that mass of flesh no bolder animation than is afforded by the peevishness of a wasp and the courage of a wren. Out upon him! *he* a leader of chivalry to deeds of glory! Give him a flagon of Rhenish to drink with his besmirched baarenhauters and lanceknechts.'

'There is the Grand Master of the Templars,' continued the baron, not sorry to keep his master's attention engaged on other topics than his own illness, though at the expense of the characters of prince and potentate—'there is the Grand Master of the Templars,' he continued, 'undaunted, skilful, brave in battle, and sage in council, having no separate kingdoms of his own to divert his exertions from the recovery of

the Holy Land — what thinks your Majesty of the Master as a general leader of the Christian host ?

‘Ha, Beau-Seant!’ answered the King. ‘Oh, no exception can be taken to Brother Giles Amaury: he understands the ordering of a battle, and the fighting in front when it begins. But, Sir Thomas, were it fair to take the Holy Land from the heathen Saladin, so full of all the virtues which may distinguish unchristened man, and give it to Giles Amaury, a worse pagan than himself, an idolater, a devil-worshipper, a necromancer, who practises crimes the most dark and unnatural, in the vaults and secret places of abomination and darkness?’

‘The Grand Master of the Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem is not tainted by fame either with heresy or magic,’ said Thomas de Vaux.

‘But is he not a sordid miser?’ said Richard, hastily — ‘has he not been suspected — ay, more than suspected — of selling to the infidels those advantages which they would never have won by fair force? Tush, man, better give the army to be made merchandise of by Venetian skippers and Lombardy pedlars than trust it to the Grand Master of St. John.’

‘Well, then, I will venture but another guess,’ said the Baron de Vaux. ‘What say you to the gallant Marquis of Montserrat, so wise, so elegant, such a good man-at-arms?’

‘Wise! cunning, you would say,’ replied Richard; ‘elegant in a lady’s chamber, if you will. Oh, ay, Conrade of Montserrat — who knows not the popinjay? Politic and versatile, he will change you his purposes as often as the trimmings of his doublet, and you shall never be able to guess the hue of his inmost vestments from their outward colours. A man-at-arms! ay, a fine figure on horseback, and can bear him well in the tilt-yard and at the barriers, when swords are blunted at point and edge, and spears are tipped with trenchers of wood instead of steel pikes. Wert thou not with me when I said to that same gay marquis, “Here we be, three good Christians, and on yonder plain there pricks a band of some threescore Saracens, what say you to charge them briskly? There are but twenty unbelieving miscreants to each true knight.”’

‘I recollect the marquis replied,’ said De Vaux, ‘that “His limbs were of flesh, not of iron, and that he would rather bear the heart of a man than of a beast, though that beast were the lion.” But I see how it is: we shall end where we began, without hope of praying at the Sepulchre, until Heaven shall restore King Richard to health.’

At this grave remark, Richard burst out into a hearty fit of laughter, the first which he had for some time indulged in. 'Why, what a thing is conscience,' he said, 'that through its means even such a thick-witted northern lord as thou canst bring thy sovereign to confess his folly! It is true that, did they not propose themselves as fit to hold my leading-staff, little should I care for plucking the silken trappings off the puppets thou hast shown me in succession. What concerns it me what fine tinsel robes they swagger in, unless when they are named as rivals in the glorious enterprise to which I have vowed myself? Yes, De Vaux, I confess my weakness, and the wilfulness of my ambition. The Christian camp contains, doubtless, many a better knight than Richard of England, and it would be wise and worthy to assign to the best of them the leading of the host; but,' continued the warlike monarch, raising himself in his bed, and shaking the cover from his head, while his eyes sparkled as they were wont to do on the eve of battle, 'were such a knight to plant the banner of the Cross on the Temple of Jerusalem, while I was unable to bear my share in the noble task, he should, so soon as I was fit to lay lance in rest, undergo my challenge to mortal combat, for having diminished my fame, and pressed in before to the object of my enterprise. But hark, what trumpets are those at a distance?'

'Those of King Philip, as I guess, my liege,' said the stout Englishman.

'Thou art dull of ear, Thomas,' said the King, endeavouring to start up, 'hearest thou not that clash and clang? By Heaven, the Turks are in the camp. I hear their *lelies*.'

He again endeavoured to get out of bed, and De Vaux was obliged to exercise his own great strength, and also to summon the assistance of the chamberlains from the inner tent, to restrain him.

'Thou art a false traitor, De Vaux,' said the incensed monarch, when, breathless and exhausted with struggling, he was compelled to submit to superior strength, and to repose in quiet on his couch. 'I would I were—I would I were but strong enough to dash thy brains out with my battle-axe!'

'I would you had the strength, my liege,' said De Vaux, 'and would even take the risk of its being so employed. The odds would be great in favour of Christendom, were Thomas Multon dead and Cœur-de-Lion himself again.'

'Mine honest, faithful servant,' said Richard, extending his hand, which the baron reverentially saluted, 'forgive thy



master's impatience of mood. It is this burning fever which chides thee, and not thy kind master, Richard of England. But go, I prithee, and bring me word what strangers are in the camp, for these sounds are not of Christendom.'

De Vaux left the pavilion on the errand assigned, and in his absence, which he had resolved should be brief, he charged the chamberlains, pages, and attendants to redouble their attention on their sovereign, with threats of holding them to responsibility, which rather added to than diminished their timid anxiety in the discharge of their duty ; for next perhaps to the ire of the monarch himself, they dreaded that of the stern and inexorable Lord of Gilsland.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Note 5.

## CHAPTER VII

There never was a time on the march parts yet  
When Scottish with English met,  
But it was marvel if the red blood ran not  
As the rain does in the street.

*Battle of Otterbourn.*

A CONSIDERABLE band of Scottish warriors had joined the Crusaders, and had naturally placed themselves under the command of the English monarch, being, like his native troops, most of them of Saxon and Norman descent, speaking the same languages, possessed, some of them, of English as well as Scottish demesnes, and allied, in some cases, by blood and intermarriage. The period also preceded that when the grasping ambition of Edward I. gave a deadly and envenomed character to the wars betwixt the two nations; the English fighting for the subjugation of Scotland, and the Scottish, with all the stern determination and obstinacy which has ever characterised their nation, for the defence of their independence, by the most violent means, under the most disadvantageous circumstances, and at the most extreme hazard. As yet, wars betwixt the two nations, though fierce and frequent, had been conducted on principles of fair hostility, and admitted of those softening shades by which courtesy, and the respect for open and generous foemen, qualify and mitigate the horrors of war. In time of peace, therefore, and especially when both, as at present, were engaged in war, waged in behalf of a common cause, and rendered dear to them by their ideas of religion, the adventurers of both countries frequently fought side by side, their natural emulation serving only to stimulate them to excel each other in their efforts against the common enemy.

The frank and martial character of Richard, who made no distinction betwixt his own subjects and those of William of Scotland, excepting as they bore themselves in the field of battle, tended much to conciliate the troops of both nations.

But upon his illness, and the disadvantageous circumstances in which the Crusaders were placed, the national disunion between the various bands united in the Crusade began to display itself, just as old wounds break out afresh in the human body when under the influence of disease or debility.

The Scottish and English, equally jealous and high-spirited, and apt to take offence — the former the more so, because the poorer and the weaker nation — began to fill up, by internal dissension, the period when the truce forbade them to wreak their united vengeance on the Saracens. Like the contending Roman chiefs of old, the Scottish would admit no superiority, and their southern neighbours would brook no equality. There were charges and recriminations, and both the common soldiery and their leaders and commanders, who had been good comrades in time of victory, lowered on each other in the period of adversity, as if their union had not been then more essential than ever, not only to the success of their common cause, but to their joint safety. The same disunion had begun to show itself betwixt the French and English, the Italians and the Germans, and even between the Danes and Swedes; but it is only that which divided the two nations whom one island bred, and who seemed more animated against each other for the very reason, that our narrative is principally concerned with.

Of all the English nobles who had followed their king to Palestine, De Vaux was most prejudiced against the Scottish; they were his near neighbours, with whom he had been engaged during his whole life in private or public warfare, and on whom he had inflicted many calamities, while he had sustained at their hands not a few. His love and devotion to the King was like the vivid affection of the old English mastiff to his master, leaving him churlish and inaccessible to all others, even towards those to whom he was indifferent, and rough and dangerous to any against whom he entertained a prejudice. De Vaux had never observed, without jealousy and displeasure, his King exhibit any mark of courtesy or favour to the wicked, deceitful, and ferocious race, born on the other side of a river, or an imaginary line drawn through waste and wilderness, and he even doubted the success of a Crusade in which they were suffered to bear arms, holding them in his secret soul little better than the Saracens, whom he came to combat. It may be added that, as being himself a blunt and downright Englishman, unaccustomed to conceal the slightest movement either of love or of dislike, he accounted the fair-spoken courtesy which

the Scots had learned, either from imitation of their frequent allies, the French, or which might have arisen from their own proud and reserved character, as a false and astucious mark of the most dangerous designs against their neighbours, over whom he believed, with genuine English confidence, they could, by fair manhood, never obtain any advantage.

Yet, though De Vaux entertained these sentiments concerning his northern neighbours, and extended them, with little mitigation, even to such as had assumed the cross, his respect for the King, and a sense of the duty imposed by his vow as a Crusader, prevented him from displaying them otherwise than by regularly shunning all intercourse with his Scottish brethren-at-arms, as far as possible, by observing a sullen taciturnity when compelled to meet them occasionally, and by looking scornfully upon them when they encountered on the march and in camp. The Scottish barons and knights were not men to bear his scorn unobserved or unrequited to ; and it came to that pass, that he was regarded as the determined and active enemy of a nation whom, after all, he only disliked, and in some sort despised. Nay, it was remarked by close observers that, if he had not towards them the charity of Scripture, which suffereth long and judges kindly, he was by no means deficient in the subordinate and limited virtue which alleviates and relieves the wants of others. The wealth of Thomas of Gilsland procured supplies of provisions and medicines, and some of these usually flowed by secret channels into the quarters of the Scottish ; his surly benevolence proceeding on the principle that, next to a man's friend, his foe was of most importance to him, passing over all the intermediate relations, as too indifferent to merit even a thought. This explanation is necessary, in order that the reader may fully understand what we are now to detail.

Thomas de Vaux had not made many steps beyond the entrance of the royal pavilion, when he was aware of what the far more acute ear of the English monarch, no mean proficient in the art of minstrelsy, had instantly discovered, that the musical strains, namely, which had reached their ears, were produced by the pipes, shalms, and kettledrums of the Saracens ; and at the bottom of an avenue of tents, which formed a broad access to the pavilion of Richard, he could see a crowd of idle soldiers assembled around the spot from which the music was heard, almost in the centre of the camp ; and he saw, with great surprise, mingled amid the helmets of various

forms worn by the Crusaders of different nations, white turbans and long pikes, announcing the presence of armed Saracens, and the huge deformed heads of several camels or dromedaries, overlooking the multitude by aid of their long, disproportioned necks.

Wondering and displeased at a sight so unexpected and singular — for it was customary to leave all flags of truce and other communications from the enemy at an appointed place without the barriers — the baron looked eagerly round for some one of whom he might inquire the cause of this alarming novelty.

The first person whom he met advancing to him, he set down at once, by his grave and haughty step, as a Spaniard or a Scot; and presently after muttered to himself — ‘And a Scot it is — he of the Leopard. I have seen him fight indifferently well, for one of his country.’

Loth to ask even a passing question, he was about to pass Sir Kenneth, with that sullen and lowering port which seems to say, ‘I know thee, but I will hold no communication with thee’; but his purpose was defeated by the Northern knight, who moved forward directly to him, and accosting him with formal courtesy, said, ‘My Lord de Vaux of Gilsland, I have in charge to speak with you.’

‘Ha!’ returned the English baron, ‘with me? But say your pleasure, so it be shortly spoken; I am on the King’s errand.’

‘Mine touches King Richard yet more nearly,’ answered Sir Kenneth; ‘I bring him, I trust, health.’

The Lord of Gilsland measured the Scot with incredulous eyes, and replied, ‘Thou art no leech, I think, sir Scot; I had as soon thought of your bringing the King of England wealth.’

Sir Kenneth, though displeased with the manner of the baron’s reply, answered calmly — ‘Health to Richard is glory and wealth to Christendom. But my time presses; I pray you, may I see the King?’

‘Surely not, fair sir,’ said the baron, ‘until your errand be told more distinctly. The sick-chambers of princes open not to all who inquire, like a Northern hostelry.’

‘My lord,’ said Kenneth, ‘the cross which I wear in common with yourself, and the importance of what I have to tell, must, for the present, cause me to pass over a bearing which else I were unapt to endure. In plain language, then, I bring with me a Moorish physician, who undertakes to work a cure on King Richard.’



'A Moorish physician!' said De Vaux; 'and who will warrant that he brings not poisons instead of remedies?'

'His own life, my lord — his head, which he offers as a guarantee.'

'I have known many a resolute ruffian,' said De Vaux, 'who valued his own life as little as it deserved, and would troop to the gallows as merrily as if the hangman were his partner in a dance.'

'But thus it is, my lord,' replied the Scot: 'Saladin, to whom none will deny the credit of a generous and valiant enemy, hath sent this leech hither with an honourable retinue and guard, befitting the high estimation in which El Hakim is held by the Soldan, and with fruits and refreshments for the King's private chamber, and such message as may pass betwixt honourable enemies, praying him to be recovered of his fever, that he may be the fitter to receive a visit from the Soldan, with his naked scimitar in his hand, and an hundred thousand cavaliers at his back. Will it please you, who are of the King's secret council, to cause these camels to be discharged of their burdens, and some order taken as to the reception of the learned physician?'

'Wonderful!' said De Vaux, as speaking to himself. 'And who will vouch for the honour of Saladin, in a case when bad faith would rid him at once of his most powerful adversary?'

'I myself,' replied Sir Kenneth, 'will be his guarantee, with honour, life, and fortune.'

'Strange!' again ejaculated De Vaux: 'the North vouches for the South — the Scot for the Turk! May I crave of you, sir knight, how you became concerned in this affair?'

'I had been absent on a pilgrimage, in the course of which,' replied Sir Kenneth, 'I had a message to discharge towards the holy hermit of Engaddi.'

'May I not be entrusted with it, Sir Kenneth, and with the answer of the holy man?'

'It may not be, my lord,' answered the Scot.

'I am of the secret council of England,' said the Englishman, haughtily.

'To which land I owe no allegiance,' said Kenneth. 'Though I have voluntarily followed in this war the personal fortunes of England's sovereign, I was despatched by the general council of the kings, princes, and supreme leaders of the army of the Blessed Cross, and to them only I render my errand.'

'Ha! say'st thou?' said the proud Baron de Vaux. 'But

know, messenger of the kings and princes as thou mayst be, no leech shall approach the sick-bed of Richard of England without the consent of him of Gilsland; and they will come on evil errand who dare to intrude themselves against it.'

He was turning loftily away, when the Scot, placing himself closer, and more opposite to him, asked, in a calm voice, yet not without expressing his share of pride, whether the Lord of Gilsland esteemed him a gentleman and a good knight.

'All Scots are ennobled by their birthright,' answered Thomas de Vaux, something ironically; but, sensible of his own injustice, and perceiving that Kenneth's colour rose, he added, 'For a good knight it were sin to doubt you, in one at least who has seen you well and bravely discharge your devoir.'

'Well, then,' said the Scottish knight, satisfied with the frankness of the last admission, 'and let me swear to you, Thomas of Gilsland, that as I am true Scottish man, which I hold a privilege equal to my ancient gentry, and as sure as I am a belted knight, and come hither to acquire *los* and fame in this mortal life, and forgiveness of my sins in that which is to come, so truly, and by the blessed cross which I wear, do I protest unto you, that I desire but the safety of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, in recommending the ministry of this Moslem physician.'

The Englishman was struck with the solemnity of the obtestation, and answered with more cordiality than he had yet exhibited, 'Tell me, Sir Knight of the Leopard, granting — which I do not doubt — that thou art thyself satisfied in this matter, shall I do well, in a land where the art of poisoning is as general as that of cooking, to bring this unknown physician to practise with his drugs on a health so valuable to Christendom?'

'My lord,' replied the Scot, 'thus only can I reply, that my squire, the only one of my retinue whom war and disease had left in attendance on me, has been of late suffering dangerously under this same fever which, in valiant King Richard, has disabled the principal limb of our holy enterprise. This leech, this El Hakim, hath ministered remedies to him not two hours since, and already he hath fallen into a refreshing sleep. That he *can* cure the disorder, which has proved so fatal, I nothing doubt; that he hath the purpose to do it is, I think, warranted by his mission from the royal Soldan, who is true-hearted and loyal, so far as a blinded infidel may be called so; and, for his eventual success, the certainty of reward in case of

succeeding, and punishment in case of voluntary failure, may be a sufficient guarantee.'

The Englishman listened with downcast looks, as one who doubted, yet was not unwilling to receive conviction. At length he looked up and said, 'May I see your sick squire, fair sir?'

The Scottish knight hesitated and coloured, yet answered at last, 'Willingly, my Lord of Gilsland; but you must remember, when you see my poor quarter, that the nobles and knights of Scotland feed not so high, sleep not so soft, and care not for the magnificence of lodgment which is proper to their southern neighbours. I am *poorly* lodged, my Lord of Gilsland,' he added, with a haughty emphasis on the word, while, with some unwillingness, he led the way to his temporary place of abode.

Whatever were the prejudices of De Vaux against the nation of his new acquaintance, and though we undertake not to deny that some of these were excited by its proverbial poverty, he had too much nobleness of disposition to enjoy the mortification of a brave individual, thus compelled to make known wants which his pride would gladly have concealed.

'Shame to the soldier of the Cross,' he said, 'who thinks of worldly splendour, or of luxurious accommodation, when pressing forward to the conquest of the Holy City. Fare as hard as we may, we shall yet be better than the host of martyrs and of saints, who, having trod these scenes before us, now hold golden lamps and evergreen palms.'

This was the most metaphorical speech which Thomas of Gilsland was ever known to utter, the rather, perhaps (as will sometimes happen), that it did not entirely express his own sentiments, being somewhat a lover of good cheer and splendid accommodation. By this time they reached the place of the camp, where the Knight of the Leopard had assumed his abode.

Appearances here did indeed promise no breach of the laws of mortification, to which the Crusaders, according to the opinion expressed by him of Gilsland, ought to subject themselves. A space of ground, large enough to accommodate perhaps thirty tents, according to the Crusaders' rules of castrametation, was partly vacant, because, in ostentation, the knight had demanded ground to the extent of his original retinue, partly occupied by a few miserable huts, hastily constructed of boughs and covered with palm leaves. These habitations seemed entirely deserted, and several of them were ruinous. The central hut, which represented the pavilion of

the leader, was distinguished by his swallow-tailed pennon, placed on the point of a spear, from which its long folds dropt motionless to the ground, as if sickening under the scorching rays of the Asiatic sun. But no pages or squires, not even a solitary warder, was placed by the emblem of feudal power and knightly degrees. If its reputation defended it not from insult, it had no other guard.

Sir Kenneth cast a melancholy look around him, but, suppressing his feelings, entered the hut, making a sign to the Baron of Gilsland to follow. He also cast around a glance of examination, which implied pity not altogether unmingled with contempt, to which, perhaps, it is as nearly akin as it is said to be to love. He then stooped his lofty crest, and entered a lowly hut, which his bulky form seemed almost entirely to fill.

The interior of the hut was chiefly occupied by two beds. One was empty, but composed of collected leaves, and spread with an antelope's hide. It seemed, from the articles of armour laid beside it, and from a crucifix of silver, carefully and reverentially disposed at the head, to be the couch of the knight himself. The other contained the invalid, of whom Sir Kenneth had spoken — a strong-built and harsh-featured man, past, as his looks betokened, the middle age of life. His couch was trimmed more softly than his master's, and it was plain that the more courtly garments of the latter, the loose robe, in which the knights showed themselves on pacific occasions, and the other little spare articles of dress and adornment, had been applied by Sir Kenneth to the accommodation of his sick domestic. In an outward part of the hut, which yet was within the range of the English baron's eye, a boy, rudely attired with buskins of deer's hide, a blue cap or bonnet, and a doublet, whose original finery was much tarnished, sat on his knees by a chafing-dish filled with charcoal, cooking upon a plate of iron the cakes of barley-bread which were then, and still are, a favourite food with the Scottish people. Part of an antelope was suspended against one of the main props of the hut, nor was it difficult to know how it had been procured; for a large stag greyhound, nobler in size and appearance than those even which guarded King Richard's sick-bed, lay eyeing the process of baking the cake. The sagacious animal, on their first entrance, uttered a stifled growl, which sounded from his deep chest like distant thunder. But he saw his master, and acknowledged his presence by wagging his tail and couching his head, abstaining from more



tumultuous or noisy greeting, as if his noble instinct had taught him the propriety of silence in a sick man's chamber.

Beside the couch, sat on a cushion, also composed of skins, the Moorish physician of whom Sir Kenneth had spoken, cross-legged, after the Eastern fashion. The imperfect light showed little of him, save that the lower part of his face was covered with a long black beard, which descended over his breast; that he wore a high *tolpach*, a Tartar cap of the lamb's-wool manufactured at Astracan, bearing the same dusky colour, and that his ample caftan, or Turkish robe, was also of a dark hue. Two piercing eyes, which gleamed with unusual lustre, were the only lineaments of his visage that could be discerned amid the darkness in which he was enveloped. The English lord stood silent with a sort of reverential awe; for, notwithstanding the roughness of his general bearing, a scene of distress and poverty, firmly endured without complaint or murmur, would at any time have claimed more reverence from Thomas de Vaux than would all the splendid formalities of a royal presence-chamber, unless that presence-chamber were King Richard's own. Nothing was, for a time, heard but the heavy and regular breathings of the invalid, who seemed in profound repose.

'He hath not slept for six nights before,' said Sir Kenneth, 'as I am assured by the youth, his attendant.'

'Noble Scot,' said Thomas de Vaux, grasping the Scottish knight's hand, with a pressure which had more of cordiality than he permitted his words to utter, 'this gear must be amended. Your esquire is but too evil fed and looked to.'

In the latter part of this speech he naturally raised his voice to its usual decided tone. The sick man was disturbed in his slumbers.

'My master,' he said, murmuring as in a dream — 'noble Sir Kenneth, taste not, to you as to me, the waters of the Clyde cold and refreshing, after the brackish springs of Palestine?'

'He dreams of his native land, and is happy in his slumbers,' whispered Sir Kenneth to De Vaux; but had scarce uttered the words, when the physician, arising from the place which he had taken near the couch of the sick, and laying the hand of the patient, whose pulse he had been carefully watching, quietly upon the couch, came to the two knights, and taking them each by the arm, while he intimated to them to remain silent, led them to the front of the hut.

'In the name of Issa ben Mariam,' he said, 'whom we



honour as you, though not with the same blinded superstition, disturb not the effect of the blessed medicine of which he hath partaken. To awaken him now is death or deprivation of reason; but return at the hour when the muezzin calls from the minaret to evening prayer in the mosque, and, if left undisturbed until then, I promise you, this same Frankish soldier shall be able, without prejudice to his health, to hold some brief converse with you, on any matters on which either, and especially his master, may have to question him.'

The knights retreated before the authoritative commands of the leech, who seemed fully to comprehend the importance of the Eastern proverb, that 'the sick-chamber of the patient is the kingdom of the physician.'

They paused, and remained standing together at the door of the hut, Sir Kenneth with the air of one who expected his visitor to say farewell, and De Vaux as if he had something on his mind which prevented him from doing so. The hound, however, had pressed out of the tent after them, and now thrust his long rough countenance into the hand of his master, as if modestly soliciting some mark of his kindness. He had no sooner received the notice which he desired, in the shape of a kind word and slight caress, than, eager to acknowledge his gratitude and joy for his master's return, he flew off at full speed, galloping in full career, and with outstretched tail, here and there, about and around, crossways and endlong, through the decayed huts and the esplanade we have described, but never transgressing those precincts which his sagacity knew were protected by his master's pennon. After a few gambols of this kind, the dog, coming close up to his master, laid at once aside his frolicsome mood, relapsed into his usual gravity and slowness of gesture and deportment, and looked as if he were ashamed that anything should have moved him to depart so far out of his sober self-control.

Both knights looked on with pleasure; for Sir Kenneth was justly proud of his noble hound, and the northern English baron was, of course, an admirer of the chase, and a judge of the animal's merits.

'A right able dog,' he said; 'I think, fair sir, King Richard hath not an alan which may match him, if he be as stanch as he is swift. But let me pray you — speaking in all honour and kindness — have you not heard the proclamation, that no one, under the rank of earl, shall keep hunting-dogs within King Richard's camp, without the royal license, which, I think, Sir Kenneth,

hath not been issued to you? I speak as Master of the Horse.'

'And I answer as a free Scottish knight,' said Kenneth, sternly. 'For the present I follow the banner of England, but I cannot remember that I have ever subjected myself to the forest laws of that kingdom, nor have I such respect for them as would incline me to do so. When the trumpet sounds to arms, my foot is in the stirrup as soon as any; when it clangs for the charge, my lance has not yet been the last laid in the rest. But for my hours of liberty or of idleness, King Richard has no title to bar my recreation.'

'Nevertheless,' said De Vaux, 'it is a folly to disobey the King's ordinance; so, with your good leave, I, as having authority in that matter, will send you a protection for my friend here.'

'I thank you,' said the Scot, coldly; 'but he knows my allotted quarters, and within these I can protect him myself. And yet,' he said, suddenly changing his manner, 'this is but a cold return for a well-meant kindness. I thank you, my lord, most heartily. The King's equerries, or prickers, might find Roswal at disadvantage, and do him some injury, which I should not, perhaps, be slow in returning, and so ill might come of it. You have seen so much of my housekeeping, my lord,' he added with a smile, 'that I need not shame to say that Roswal is our principal purveyor; and well I hope our Lion Richard will not be like the lion in the minstrel fable, that went a-hunting and kept the whole booty to himself. I cannot think he would grudge a poor gentleman, who follows him faithfully, his hour of sport and his morsel of game, more especially when other food is hard enough to come by.'

'By my faith, you do the King no more than justice; and yet,' said the baron, 'there is something in these words, "vert" and "venison," that turns the very brains of our Norman princes.'

'We have heard of late,' said the Scot, 'by minstrels and pilgrims, that your outlawed yeomen have formed great bands in the shires of York and Nottingham, having at their head a most stout archer, called Robin Hood, with his lieutenant, Little John. Methinks it were better that Richard relaxed his forest code in England than endeavoured to enforce it in the Holy Land.'

'Wild work, Sir Kenneth,' replied De Vaux, shrugging his shoulders, as one who would avoid a perilous or displeasing

topic — ‘a mad world, sir. I must now bid you adieu, having presently to return to the King’s pavilion. At vespers, I will again, with your leave, visit your quarters, and speak with this same infidel physician. I would, in the meantime, were it no offence, willingly send you what would somewhat mend your cheer.’

‘I thank you, sir,’ said Sir Kenneth, ‘but it needs not: Roswal hath already stocked my larder for two weeks, since the sun of Palestine, if it brings diseases, serves also to dry venison.’

The two warriors parted much better friends than they had met; but ere they separated, Thomas de Vaux informed himself at more length of the circumstances attending the mission of the Eastern physician, and received from the Scottish knight the credentials which he had brought to King Richard on the part of Saladin.

## CHAPTER VIII

A wise physician, skill'd our wounds to heal,  
Is more than armies to the common weal.

POPE'S *Iliad*.

‘THIS is a strange tale, Sir Thomas,’ said the sick monarch, when he had heard the report of the trusty Baron of Gilsland; ‘art thou sure this Scottish man is a tall man and true?’

‘I cannot say, my lord,’ replied the jealous Borderer: ‘I live a little too near the Scots to gather much truth among them, having found them ever fair and false. But this man’s bearing is that of a true man, were he a devil as well as a Scot; that I must needs say for him in conscience.’

‘And for his carriage as a knight, how say’st thou, De Vaux?’ demanded the King.

‘It is your Majesty’s business more than mine to note men’s bearings; and I warrant you have noted the manner in which this man of the Leopard hath borne himself. He hath been full well spoken of.’

‘And justly, Thomas,’ said the King. ‘We have ourselves witnessed him. It is indeed our purpose, in placing ourselves ever in the front of battle, to see how our liegemen and followers acquit themselves, and not from a desire to accumulate vain-glory to ourselves, as some have supposed. We know the vanity of the praise of man, which is but a vapour, and buckle on our armour for other purposes than to win it.’

De Vaux was alarmed when he heard the King make a declaration so inconsistent with his nature, and believed at first that nothing short of the approach of death could have brought him to speak in depreciating terms of military renown, which was the very breath of his nostrils. But, recollecting he had met the royal confessor in the outer pavilion, he was shrewd enough to place this temporary self-abasement to the effect of the reverend man’s lesson, and suffered the King to proceed without reply.

‘Yes,’ continued Richard, ‘I have indeed marked the manner in which this knight does his devoir. My leading-staff were not worth a fool’s bauble, had he escaped my notice; and he had ere now tasted of our bounty, but that I have also marked his overweening and audacious presumption.’

‘My liege,’ said the Baron of Gilsland, observing the King’s countenance change, ‘I fear I have transgressed your pleasure in lending some countenance to his transgression.’

‘How, De Multon, thou?’ said the King, contracting his brows and speaking in a tone of angry surprise — ‘thou countenance his insolence? It cannot be.’

‘Nay, your Majesty will pardon me to remind you that I have by mine office right to grant liberty to men of gentle blood to keep them a hound or two within camp, just to cherish the noble art of venerie; and besides, it were a sin to have maimed or harmed a thing so noble as this gentleman’s dog.’

‘Has he then a dog so handsome?’ said the King.

‘A most perfect creature of Heaven,’ said the baron, who was an enthusiast in field-sports, ‘of the noblest Northern breed — deep in the chest, strong in the stern, black colour, and brindled on the breast and legs — not spotted with white, but just shaded into grey — strength to pull down a bull, swiftness to cote an antelope.’

The King laughed at his enthusiasm. ‘Well, thou hast given him leave to keep the hound, so there is an end of it. Be not, however, liberal of your licenses among those knights adventurers who have no prince or leader to depend upon; they are ungovernable, and leave no game in Palestine. But to this piece of learned heathenese — say’st thou the Scot met him in the desert?’

‘No, my liege, the Scot’s tale runs thus: — He was despatched to the old hermit of Engaddi, of whom men talk so much —’

‘Sdeath and hell!’ said Richard, starting up. ‘By whom despatched and for what? Who dared send any one thither when our Queen was in the convent of Engaddi, upon her pilgrimage for our recovery?’

‘The council of the Crusade sent him, my lord,’ answered the Baron de Vaux; ‘for what purpose, he declined to account to me. I think it is scarce known in the camp that your royal consort is on a pilgrimage, and even the princes may not have been aware, as the Queen has been sequestered from company since your love prohibited her attendance in case of infection.’



‘Well, it shall be looked into,’ said Richard. ‘So this Scottish man, this envoy, met with a wandering physician at the grotto of Engaddi — ha?’

‘Not so, my liege,’ replied De Vaux; ‘but he met, I think, near that place with a Saracen emir with whom he had some mêlée in the way of proof of valour, and finding him worthy to bear brave men company, they went together, as errant knights are wont, to the grotto of Engaddi.’

Here De Vaux stopped, for he was not one of those who can tell a long story in a sentence.

‘And did they there meet the physician?’ demanded the King, impatiently.

‘No, my liege,’ replied De Vaux; ‘but the Saracen, learning your Majesty’s grievous illness, undertook that Saladin should send his own physician to you, and with many assurances of his eminent skill; and he came to the grotto accordingly, after the Scottish knight had tarried a day for him and more. He is attended as if he were a prince, with drums and atabals, and servants on horse and foot, and brings with him letters of credence from Saladin.’

‘Have they been examined by Giacomo Loredani?’

‘I showed them to the interpreter ere bringing them hither, and behold their contents in English.’

Richard took a scroll, in which were inscribed these words: ‘The blessing of Allah and his Prophet Mohammed — (‘Out upon the hound!’ said Richard, spitting in contempt, by way of interjection) — Saladin, king of kings, soldan of Egypt and of Syria, the light and refuge of the earth, to the great Melech Ric — Richard of England — greeting. Whereas we have been informed that the hand of sickness hath been heavy upon thee, our royal brother, and that thou hast with thee only such Nazarene and Jewish mediciners as work without the blessing of Allah and our holy Prophet — (‘Confusion on his head!’ again muttered the English monarch) — we have therefore sent to tend and wait upon thee at this time the physician to our own person, Adonbec el Hakim, before whose face the angel Azrael<sup>1</sup> spreads his wings and departs from the sick-chamber; who knows the virtues of herbs and stones, the path of the sun, moon, and stars, and can save man from all that is not written on his forehead. And this we do, praying you heartily to honour and make use of his skill, not only that we may do service to thy worth and valour, which is the glory of all the

<sup>1</sup> The Angel of Death.

nations of Frangistan, but that we may bring the controversy which is at present between us to an end, either by honourable agreement or by open trial thereof with our weapons in a fair field; seeing that it neither becomes thy place and courage to die the death of a slave who hath been overwrought by his taskmaster, nor befits it our fame that a brave adversary be snatched from our weapon by such a disease. And, therefore, may the holy ——

‘Hold—hold,’ said Richard, ‘I will have no more of his dog of a Prophet! It makes me sick to think the valiant and worthy Soldan should believe in a dead dog. Yes, I will see his physician. I will put myself into the charge of this Hakim. I will repay the noble Soldan his generosity. I will meet Saladin in the field, as he so worthily proposes, and he shall have no cause to term Richard of England ungrateful. I will strike him to the earth with my battle-axe. I will convert him to Holy Church with such blows as he has rarely endured. He shall recant his errors before my good cross-handled sword, and I will have him baptized in the battle-field, from my own helmet, though the cleansing waters were mixed with the blood of us both. Haste, De Vaux, why dost thou delay a conclusion so pleasing? Fetch the Hakim hither.’

‘My lord,’ said the baron, who perhaps saw some accession of fever in this overflow of confidence, ‘bethink you, the Soldan is a pagan, and that you are his most formidable enemy ——’

‘For which reason he is the more bound to do me service in this matter, lest a paltry fever end the quarrel betwixt two such kings. I tell thee, he loves me as I love him—as noble adversaries ever love each other; by my honour, it were sin to doubt his good faith.’

‘Nevertheless, my lord, it were well to wait the issue of these medicines upon the Scottish squire,’ said the Lord of Gilsland; ‘my own life depends upon it, for worthy were I to die like a dog, did I proceed rashly in this matter, and make shipwreck of the weal of Christendom.’

‘I never knew thee before hesitate for fear of life,’ said Richard, upbraidingly.

‘Nor would I now, my liege,’ replied the stout-hearted baron, ‘save that yours lies at pledge as well as my own.’

‘Well, thou suspicious mortal,’ answered Richard, ‘begone then, and watch the progress of this remedy. I could almost wish it might either cure or kill me, for I am weary of lying

here like an ox dying of the murrain, when tambours are beating, horses stamping, and trumpets sounding without.'

The baron hastily departed, resolved, however, to communicate his errand to some churchman, as he felt something burdened in conscience at the idea of his master being attended by an unbeliever.

The Archbishop of Tyre was the first to whom he confided his doubts, knowing his interest with his master, Richard, who both loved and honoured that sagacious prelate. The bishop heard the doubts which De Vaux stated with that acuteness of intelligence which distinguishes the Roman Catholic clergy. The religious scruples of De Vaux he treated with as much lightness as propriety permitted him to exhibit on such a subject to a layman.

'Mediciners,' he said, 'like the medicines which they employed, were often useful, though the one were by birth or manners the vilest of humanity, as the others are, in many cases, extracted from the basest materials. Men may use the assistance of pagans and infidels,' he continued, 'in their need, and there is reason to think that one cause of their being permitted to remain on earth is, that they might minister to the convenience of true Christians. Thus, we lawfully make slaves of heathen captives. Again,' proceeded the prelate, 'there is no doubt that the primitive Christians used the services of the unconverted heathen; thus, in the ship of Alexandria, in which the blessed Apostle Paul sailed to Italy, the sailors were doubtless pagans, yet what said the holy saint when their ministry was needful: "*Nisi hi in navi manserint, vos salvi fieri non potestis* — Unless these men abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." Again, Jews are infidels to Christianity as well as Mohammedans. But there are few physicians in the camp excepting Jews, and such are employed without scandal or scruple. Therefore, Mohammedans may be used for their service in that capacity, *quod erat demonstrandum*.'

This reasoning entirely removed the scruples of Thomas de Vaux, who was particularly moved by the Latin quotation, as he did not understand a word of it.

But the bishop proceeded with far less fluency when he considered the possibility of the Saracen's acting with bad faith; and here he came not to a speedy decision. The baron showed him the letters of credence. He read and re-read them, and compared the original with the translation.

'It is a dish choicely cooked,' he said, 'to the palate of

King Richard, and I cannot but have my suspicions of the wily Saracen. They are curious in the art of poisons, and can so temper them that they shall be weeks in acting upon the party, during which time the perpetrator has leisure to escape. They can impregnate cloth and leather, nay, even paper and parchment, with the most subtle venom. Our Lady forgive me! and wherefore, knowing this, hold I these letters of credence so close to my face? Take them, Sir Thomas — take them speedily.'

Here he gave them at arm's-length, and with some appearance of haste, to the baron. 'But come, my Lord de Vaux,' he continued, 'wend we to the tent of this sick squire, where we shall learn whether this Hakim hath really the art of curing which he professeth, ere we consider whether there be safety in permitting him to exercise his art upon King Richard. Yet, hold! let me first take my pouncet-box, for these fevers spread like an infection. I would advise you to use dried rosemary steeped in vinegar, my lord. I, too, know something of the healing art.'

'I thank your reverend lordship,' replied Thomas of Gilsland; 'but had I been accessible to the fever, I had caught it long since by the bed of my master.'

The Bishop of Tyre blushed, for he had rather avoided the presence of the sick monarch; and he bid the baron lead on.

As they paused before the wretched hut in which Kenneth of the Leopard and his follower abode, the bishop said to De Vaux, 'Now, of a surety, my lord, these Scottish knights have worse care of their followers than we of our dogs. Here is a knight, valiant they say in battle, and thought fitting to be graced with charges of weight in time of truce, whose esquire of the body is lodged worse than in the worst dog-kennel in England. What say you of your neighbours?'

'That a master doth well enough for his servant, when he lodgeth him in no worse dwelling than his own,' said De Vaux, and entered the hut.

The bishop followed, not without evident reluctance; for though he lacked not courage in some respects, yet it was tempered with a strong and lively regard for his own safety. He recollected, however, the necessity there was for judging personally of the skill of the Arabian physician, and entered the hut with a stateliness of manner calculated, as he thought, to impose respect on the stranger.

The prelate was, indeed, a striking and commanding figure

In his youth he had been eminently handsome, and, even in age, was unwilling to appear less so. His episcopal dress was of the richest fashion, trimmed with costly fur, and surrounded by a cope of curious needlework. The rings on his fingers were worth a goodly barony, and the hood which he wore, though now unclasped and thrown back for heat, had studs of pure gold to fasten it around his throat and under his chin when he so inclined. His long beard, now silvered with age, descended over his breast. One of two youthful acolytes who attended him created an artificial shade, peculiar then to the East, by bearing over his head an umbrella of palmetto leaves, while the other refreshed his reverend master by agitating a fan of peacock-feathers.

When the Bishop of Tyre entered the hut of the Scottish knight, the master was absent; and the Moorish physician, whom he had come to see, sat in the very posture in which De Vaux had left him several hours before, cross-legged upon a mat made of twisted leaves, by the side of the patient, who appeared in deep slumber, and whose pulse he felt from time to time. The bishop remained standing before him in silence for two or three minutes, as if expecting some honourable salutation, or at least that the Saracen would seem struck with the dignity of his appearance. But Adonbec el Hakim took no notice of him beyond a passing glance, and when the prelate at length saluted him in the *lingua franca* current in the country, he only replied by the ordinary Oriental greeting, '*Salam alicum* — peace be with you.'

'Art thou a physician, infidel?' said the bishop, somewhat mortified at this cold reception. 'I would speak with thee on that art.'

'If thou knewest aught of medicine,' answered El Hakim, 'thou wouldst be aware that physicians hold no counsel or debate in the sick-chamber of their patient. Hear,' he added, as the low growling of the staghound was heard from the inner hut, 'even the dog might teach thee reason, *ulemat*. His instinct teaches him to suppress his barking in the sick man's hearing. Come without the tent,' said he, rising and leading the way, 'if thou hast aught to say with me.'

Notwithstanding the plainness of the Saracen leech's dress, and his inferiority of size, when contrasted with the tall prelate and gigantic English baron, there was something striking in his manner and countenance, which prevented the Bishop of Tyre from expressing strongly the displeasure he felt at this



unceremonious rebuke. When without the hut, he gazed upon Adonbec in silence for several minutes before he could fix on the best manner to renew the conversation. No locks were seen under the high bonnet of the Arabian, which hid also part of a brow that seemed lofty and expanded, smooth and free from wrinkles, as were his cheeks, where they were seen under the shade of his long beard. We have elsewhere noticed the piercing quality of his dark eyes.

The prelate, struck with his apparent youth, at length broke a pause which the other seemed in no haste to interrupt, by demanding of the Arabian how old he was.

'The years of ordinary men,' said the Saracen, 'are counted by their wrinkles, those of sages by their studies. I dare not call myself older than an hundred revolutions of the Hegira.'<sup>1</sup>

The Baron of Gilsland, who took this for a literal assertion that he was a century old, looked doubtfully upon the prelate, who, though he better understood the meaning of *El Hakim*, answered his glance by mysteriously shaking his head. He resumed an air of importance, when he again authoritatively demanded what evidence Adonbec could produce of his medical proficiency.

'Ye have the word of the mighty Saladin,' said the sage, touching his cap in sign of reverence, 'a word which was never broken towards friend or foe; what, Nazarene, wouldst thou demand more?'

'I would have ocular proof of thy skill,' said the baron, 'and without it thou approachest not to the couch of King Richard.'

'The praise of the physician,' said the Arabian, 'is in the recovery of his patient. Behold this sergeant, whose blood has been dried up by the fever which has whitened your camp with skeletons, and against which the art of your Nazarene leeches hath been like a silken doublet against a lance of steel. Look at his fingers and arms, wasted like the claws and shanks of the crane. Death had this morning his clutch on him; but had Azrael been on one side of the couch, I being on the other, his soul should not have been reft from his body. Disturb me not with farther questions, but await the critical minute, and behold in silent wonder the marvellous event.'

The physician had then recourse to his astrolabe, the oracle of Eastern science, and, watching with grave precision until the

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<sup>1</sup> Meaning, that his attainments were those which might have been made in a hundred years.

precise time of the evening prayer had arrived, he sunk on his knees, with his face turned to Mecca, and recited the petitions which close the Moslemah's day of toil.

The bishop and the English baron looked on each other meanwhile with symptoms of contempt and indignation, but neither judged it fit to interrupt El Hakim in his devotions, unholy as they considered them to be.

The Arab arose from the earth, on which he had prostrated himself, and, walking into the hut where the patient lay extended, he drew a sponge from a small silver box, dipt perhaps in some aromatic distillation; for when he put it to the sleeper's nose, he sneezed, awoke, and looked wildly around. He was a ghastly spectacle, as he sat up almost naked on his couch, the bones and cartilages as visible through the surface of his skin as if they had never been clothed with flesh; his face was long, and furrowed with wrinkles, but his eye, though it wandered at first, became gradually more settled. He seemed to be aware of the presence of his dignified visitors, for he attempted feebly to pull the covering from his head, in token of reverence, as he inquired, in a subdued and submissive voice, for his master.

'Do you know us, vassal?' said the Lord of Gilsland.

'Not perfectly, my lord,' replied the squire, faintly. 'My sleep has been long and full of dreams. Yet I know that you are a great English lord, as seemeth by the red cross, and this a holy prelate, whose blessing I crave on me a poor sinner.'

'Thou hast it: *Benedictio Domini sit vobiscum*,' said the prelate, making the sign of the cross, but without approaching nearer to the patient's bed.

'Your eyes witness,' said the Arabian, 'the fever hath been subdued: he speaks with calmness and recollection, his pulse beats composedly as yours — try its pulsations yourself.'

The prelate declined the experiment; but Thomas of Gilsland, more determined on making the trial, did so, and satisfied himself that the fever was indeed gone.

'This is most wonderful,' said the knight, looking to the bishop: 'the man is assuredly cured. I must conduct this mediciner presently to King Richard's tent. What thinks your reverence?'

'Stay, let me finish one cure ere I commence another,' said the Arab; 'I will pass with you when I have given my patient the second cup of this most holy elixir.'

So saying, he pulled out a silver cup, and filling it with

water from a gourd which stood by the bedside, he next drew forth a small silken bag made of network, twisted with silver, the contents of which the bystanders could not discover, and immersing it in the cup, continued to watch it in silence during the space of five minutes. It seemed to the spectators as if some effervescence took place during the operation ; but if so, it instantly subsided.

‘Drink,’ said the physician to the sick man ; ‘sleep, and awaken free from malady.’

‘And with this simple-seeming draught thou wilt undertake to cure a monarch ?’ said the Bishop of Tyre.

‘I have cured a beggar, as you may behold,’ replied the sage. ‘Are the kings of Frangistan made of other clay than the meanest of their subjects ?’

‘Let us have him presently to the King,’ said the Baron of Gilsland. ‘He hath shown that he possesses the secret which may restore his health. If he fails to exercise it, I will put himself past the power of medicine.’

As they were about to leave the hut, the sick man, raising his voice as much as his weakness permitted, exclaimed, ‘Reverend father, noble knight, and you, kind leech, if you would have me sleep and recover, tell me in charity what is become of my dear master ?’

‘He is upon a distant expedition, friend,’ replied the prelate — ‘on an honourable embassy, which may detain him for some days.’

‘Nay,’ said the Baron of Gilsland, ‘why deceive the poor fellow ? Friend, thy master has returned to the camp, and you will presently see him.’

The invalid held up, as if in thankfulness, his wasted hands to heaven, and, resisting no longer the soporiferous operation of the elixir, sunk down in a gentle sleep.

‘You are a better physician than I, Sir Thomas,’ said the prelate : ‘a soothing falsehood is fitter for a sick-room than an unpleasing truth.’

‘How mean you, my reverend lord ?’ said De Vaux, hastily. ‘Think you I would tell a falsehood to save the lives of a dozen such as he ?’

‘You said,’ replied the bishop, with manifest symptoms of alarm — ‘you said the esquire’s master was returned — he, I mean, of the Couchant Leopard ?’

‘And he is returned,’ said De Vaux. ‘I spoke with him but a few hours since. This learned leech came in his company.’

'Holy Virgin! why told you not of his return to me?' said the bishop, in evident perturbation.

'Did I not say that this same Knight of the Leopard had returned in company with the physician? I thought I had,' replied De Vaux, carelessly; 'but what signified his return to the skill of the physician or the cure of his Majesty?'

'Much, Sir Thomas — it signified much,' said the bishop, clenching his hands, pressing his foot against the earth, and giving signs of impatience, as if in an involuntary manner. 'But where can he be gone now, this same knight? God be with us — here may be some fatal errors!'

'Yonder serf in the outer space,' said De Vaux, not without wonder at the bishop's emotion, 'can probably tell us whither his master has gone.'

The lad was summoned, and, in a language nearly incomprehensible to them, gave them at length to understand that an officer had summoned his master to the royal tent, some time before their arrival at that of his master. The anxiety of the bishop appeared to rise to the highest, and became evident to De Vaux, though neither an acute observer nor of a suspicious temper. But with his anxiety seemed to increase his wish to keep it subdued and unobserved. He took a hasty leave of De Vaux, who looked after him with astonishment; and, after shrugging up his shoulders in silent wonder, proceeded to conduct the Arabian physician to the tent of King Richard.

## CHAPTER IX

This is the prince of leeches : fever, plague,  
Cold rheum, and hot podagra, do but look on him,  
And quit their grasp upon the tortured sinews.

*Anonymous.*

THE Baron of Gilsland walked with slow step and an anxious countenance towards the royal pavilion. He had much diffidence of his own capacity, except in a field of battle, and, conscious of no very acute intellect, was usually contented to wonder at circumstances which a man of livelier imagination would have endeavoured to investigate and understand, or at least would have made the subject of speculation. But it seemed very extraordinary, even to him, that the attention of the bishop should have been at once abstracted from all reflection on the marvellous cure which they had witnessed, and upon the probability it afforded of Richard being restored to health, by what seemed a very trivial piece of information, announcing the motions of a beggarly Scottish knight, than whom Thomas of Gilsland knew nothing within the circle of gentle blood more unimportant or contemptible ; and, despite his usual habit of passively beholding passing events, the baron's spirit toiled with unwonted attempts to form conjectures on the cause.

At length the idea occurred at once to him, that the whole might be a conspiracy against King Richard, formed within the camp of the allies, and to which the bishop, who was by some represented as a politic and unscrupulous person, was not unlikely to have been accessory. It was true that, in his own opinion, there existed no character so perfect as that of his master ; for Richard being the flower of chivalry, and the chief of Christian leaders, and obeying in all points the commands of Holy Church, De Vaux's ideas of perfection went no farther. Still he knew that, however unworthily, it had been always his master's fate to draw as much reproach and dislike as honour



and attachment from the display of his great qualities ; and that in the very camp, and amongst those princes bound by oath to the Crusade, were many who would have sacrificed all hope of victory over the Saracens to the pleasure of ruining, or at least of humbling, Richard of England.

‘Wherefore,’ said the baron to himself, ‘it is in no sense impossible that this El Hakim, with this his cure, or seeming cure, wrought on the body of the Scottish squire, may mean nothing but a trick, to which he of the Leopard may be accessory, and wherein the Bishop of Tyre, prelate as he is, may have some share.’

This hypothesis, indeed, could not be so easily reconciled with the alarm manifested by the bishop, on learning that, contrary to his expectation, the Scottish knight had suddenly returned to the Crusaders’ camp. But De Vaux was influenced only by his general prejudices, which dictated to him the assured belief that a wily Italian priest, a false-hearted Scot, and an infidel physician formed a set of ingredients from which all evil, and no good, was likely to be extracted. He resolved, however, to lay his scruples bluntly before the King, of whose judgment he had nearly as high an opinion as of his valour.

Meantime, events had taken place very contrary to the suppositions which Thomas de Vaux had entertained. Scarce had he left the royal pavilion, when, betwixt the impatience of the fever and that which was natural to his disposition, Richard began to murmur at his delay, and express an earnest desire for his return. He had seen enough to try to reason himself out of this irritation, which greatly increased his bodily malady. He wearied his attendants by demanding from them amusements, and the breviary of the priest, the romance of the clerk, even the harp of his favourite minstrel, were had recourse to in vain. At length, some two hours before sundown, and long, therefore, ere he could expect a satisfactory account of the process of the cure which the Moor or Arabian had undertaken, he sent, as we have already heard, a messenger commanding the attendance of the Knight of the Leopard, determined to soothe his impatience by obtaining from Sir Kenneth a more particular account of the cause of his absence from the camp, and the circumstances of his meeting with this celebrated physician.

The Scottish knight, thus summoned, entered the royal presence as one who was no stranger to such scenes. He was scarcely known to the King of England, even by sight, although, tenacious of his rank, as devout in the adoration of the lady of

his secret heart, he had never been absent on those occasions when the munificence and hospitality of England opened the court of its monarch to all who held a certain rank in chivalry. The King gazed fixedly on Sir Kenneth approaching his bedside, while the knight bent his knee for a moment, then arose and stood before him, as became an officer in the presence of his sovereign, in a posture of deference, but not of subservience or humility.

'Thy name,' said the King, 'is Kenneth of the Leopard. From whom hadst thou degree of knighthood?'

'I took it from the sword of William the Lion, King of Scotland,' replied the Scot.

'A weapon,' said the King, 'well worthy to confer honour, nor has it been laid on an undeserving shoulder. We have seen thee bear thyself knightly and valiantly in press of battle, when most need there was; and thou hadst not been yet to learn that thy deserts were known to us, but that thy presumption in other points has been such that thy services can challenge no better reward than that of pardon for thy transgression. What sayst thou — ha?'

Kenneth attempted to speak, but was unable to express himself distinctly, the consciousness of his too ambitious love, and the keen falcon glance with which Cœur-de-Lion seemed to penetrate his inmost soul, combining to disconcert him.

'And yet,' said the King, 'although soldiers should obey command, and vassals be respectful towards their superiors, we might forgive a brave knight greater offence than the keeping a simple hound, though it were contrary to our express public ordinance.'

Richard kept his eye fixed on the Scot's face, beheld, and beholding smiled inwardly at, the relief produced by the turn he had given to his general accusation.

'So please you, my lord,' said the Scot, 'your Majesty must be good to us poor gentlemen of Scotland in this matter. We are far from home, scant of revenues, and cannot support ourselves as your wealthy nobles, who have credit of the Lombards. The Saracens shall feel our blows the harder that we eat a piece of dried venison from time to time with our herbs and barley-cakes.'

'It skills not asking my leave,' said Richard, 'since Thomas de Vaux, who doth, like all around me, that which is fittest in his own eyes, hath already given thee permission for hunting and hawking.'

'For hunting only, and please you,' said the Scot; 'but, if it please your Majesty to indulge me with the privilege of hawking also, and you list to trust me with a falcon on fist, I trust I could supply your royal mess with some choice water-fowl.'

'I dread me, if thou hadst but the falcon,' said the King, 'thou wouldst scarce wait for the permission. I wot well it is said abroad that we of the line of Anjou resent offence against our forest laws as highly as we would do treason against our crown. To brave and worthy men, however, we could pardon either misdemeanour. But enough of this. I desire to know of you, sir knight, wherefore, and by whose authority, you took this recent journey to the wilderness of the Dead Sea and Engaddi?'

'By order,' replied the knight, 'of the council of the princes of the holy Crusade.'

'And how dared any one to give such an order, when I — not the least, surely, in the league — was unacquainted with it?'

'It was not my part, please your Highness,' said the Scot, 'to inquire into such particulars. I am a soldier of the Cross — serving, doubtless, for the present, under your Highness's banner, and proud of the permission to do so; but still one who hath taken on him the holy symbol for the rights of Christianity, and the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre, and bound, therefore, to obey, without question, the orders of the princes and chiefs by whom the blessed enterprise is directed. That indisposition should seclude, I trust but for a short time, your Highness from their councils, in which you hold so potential a voice, I must lament with all Christendom; but, as a soldier, I must obey those on whom the lawful right of command devolves, or set but an evil example in the Christian camp.'

'Thou say'st well,' said King Richard; 'and the blame rests not with thee, but with those with whom, when it shall please Heaven to raise me from this accursed bed of pain and inactivity, I hope to reckon roundly. What was the purport of thy message?'

'Methinks, and please your Highness,' replied Sir Kenneth, 'that were best asked of those who sent me, and who can render the reasons of mine errand; whereas, I can only tell its outward form and purport.'

'Palter not with me, sir Scot; it were ill for thy safety,' said the irritable monarch.

'My safety, my lord,' replied the knight, firmly, 'I cast behind me as a regardless thing when I vowed myself to this

enterprise, looking rather to my immortal welfare than to that which concerns my earthly body.'

'By the mass,' said King Richard, 'thou art a brave fellow! Hark thee, sir knight, I love the Scottish people: they are hardy, though dogged and stubborn, and, I think, true men in the main, though the necessity of state has sometimes constrained them to be dissemblers. I deserve some love at their hand, for I have voluntarily done what they could not by arms have extorted from me, any more than from my predecessors: I have re-established the fortresses of Roxburgh and Berwick, which lay in pledge to England; I have restored your ancient boundaries; and, finally, I have renounced a claim to homage upon the crown of England, which I thought unjustly forced on you. I have endeavoured to make honourable and independent friends, where former kings of England attempted only to compel unwilling and rebellious vassals.'

'All this you have done, my Lord King,' said Sir Kenneth, bowing — 'all this you have done, by your royal treaty with our sovereign at Canterbury. Therefore have you me, and many better Scottish men, making war against the infidels, under your banners, who would else have been ravaging your frontiers in England. If their numbers are now few, it is because their lives have been freely waged and wasted.'

'I grant it true,' said the King; 'and for the good offices I have done your land, I require you to remember that, as a principal member of the Christian league, I have a right to know the negotiations of my confederates. Do me, therefore, the justice to tell me what I have a title to be acquainted with, and which I am certain to know more truly from you than from others.'

'My lord,' said the Scot, 'thus conjured, I will speak the truth; for I well believe that your purposes towards the principal object of our expedition are single-hearted and honest, and it is more than I dare warrant for others of the Holy League. Be pleased, therefore, to know, my charge was to propose, through the medium of the hermit of Eugaddi, a holy man, respected and protected by Saladin himself ——'

'A continuation of the truce, I doubt not,' said Richard, hastily interrupting him.

'No, by St. Andrew, my liege,' said the Scottish knight; 'but the establishment of a lasting peace, and the withdrawing our armies from Palestine.'

'St. George!' said Richard, in astonishment. 'Ill as I have

justly thought of them, I could not have dreamed they would have humbled themselves to such dishonour. Speak, Sir Kenneth, with what will did you carry such a message ?'

'With right good will, my lord,' said Kenneth ; 'because, when we had lost our noble leader, under whose guidance alone I hoped for victory, I saw none who could succeed him likely to lead us to conquest, and I accounted it well in such circumstances to avoid defeat.'

'And on what conditions was this hopeful peace to be contracted ?' said King Richard, painfully suppressing the passion with which his heart was almost bursting.

'These were not entrusted to me, my lord,' answered the Knight of the Couchant Leopard. 'I delivered them sealed to the hermit.'

'And for what hold you this reverend hermit—for fool, madman, traitor, or saint ?' said Richard.

'His folly, sire,' replied the shrewd Scottishman, 'I hold to be assumed to win favour and reverence from the Paynimrie, who regard madmen as the inspired of Heaven ; at least it seemed to me as exhibited only occasionally, and not as mixing, like natural folly, with the general tenor of his mind.'

'Shrewdly replied,' said the monarch, throwing himself back on his couch, from which he had half-raised himself. 'Now of his penitence ?'

'His penitence,' continued Kenneth, 'appears to me sincere, and the fruits of remorse for some dreadful crime, for which he seems, in his own opinion, condemned to reprobation.'

'And for his policy ?' said King Richard.

'Methinks, my lord,' said the Scottish knight, 'he despairs of the security of Palestine, as of his own salvation, by any means short of a miracle—at least, since the arm of Richard of England hath ceased to strike for it.'

'And therefore the coward policy of this hermit is like that of these miserable princes, who, forgetful of their knighthood and their faith, are only resolved and determined when the question is retreat, and, rather than go forward against an armed Saracen, would trample in their flight over a dying ally.'

'Might I so far presume, my Lord King,' said the Scottish knight, 'this discourse but heats your disease, the enemy from which Christendom dreads more evil than from armed hosts of infidels.'

The countenance of King Richard was, indeed, more flushed,



and his action became more feverishly vehement, as, with clenched hand, expanded arm, and flashing eyes, he seemed at once to suffer under bodily pain and at the same time under vexation of mind, while his high spirit led him to speak on, as if in contempt of both.

‘You can flatter, sir knight,’ he said, ‘but you escape me not. I must know more from you than you have yet told me. Saw you my royal consort when at Engaddi?’

‘To my knowledge — no, my lord,’ replied Sir Kenneth, with considerable perturbation; for he remembered the midnight procession in the chapel of the rocks.

‘I ask you,’ said the King, in a sterner voice, ‘whether you were not in the chapel of the Carmelite nuns at Engaddi, and there saw Berengaria, Queen of England, and the ladies of her court, who went thither on pilgrimage?’

‘My lord,’ said Sir Kenneth, ‘I will speak the truth as in the confessional. In a subterranean chapel, to which the anchorite conducted me, I beheld a choir of ladies do homage to a relic of the highest sanctity; but as I saw not their faces, nor heard their voices, unless in the hymns which they chanted, I cannot tell whether the Queen of England was of the bevy.’

‘And was there no one of these ladies known to you?’

Sir Kenneth stood silent.

‘I ask you,’ said Richard, raising himself on his elbow, ‘as a knight and a gentleman — and I shall know by your answer how you value either character — did you, or did you not, know any lady amongst that band of worshippers?’

‘My lord,’ said Kenneth, not without much hesitation, ‘I might guess.’

‘And I also may guess,’ said the King, frowning sternly; ‘but it is enough. Leopard as you are, sir knight, beware tempting the lion’s paw. Harkye, to become enamoured of the moon would be but an act of folly; but to leap from the battlements of a lofty tower, in the wild hope of coming within her sphere, were self-destructive madness.’

At this moment some bustling was heard in the outer apartment, and the King, hastily changing to his more natural manner, said, ‘Enough — begone — speed to De Vaux, and send him hither with the Arabian physician. My life for the faith of the Soldan! Would he but abjure his false law, I would aid him with my sword to drive this scum of French and Austrians from his dominions, and think Palestine as well ruled

by him as when her kings were anointed by the decree of Heaven itself.'

The Knight of the Leopard retired, and presently afterwards the chamberlain announced a deputation from the council, who had come to wait on the Majesty of England.

'It is well they allow that I am living yet,' was his reply. 'Who are the reverend ambassadors?'

'The Grand Master of the Templars and the Marquis of Montserrat.'

'Our brother of France loves not sick-beds,' said Richard; 'yet, had Philip been ill, I had stood by his couch long since. Josceline, lay me the couch more fairly, it is tumbled like a stormy sea; reach me yonder steel mirror; pass a comb through my hair and beard — they look, indeed, liker a lion's mane than a Christian man's locks; bring water.'

'My lord,' said the trembling chamberlain, 'the leeches say that cold water may be fatal.'

'To the foul fiend with the leeches!' replied the monarch; 'if they cannot cure me, think you I will allow them to torment me? There, then,' he said, after having made his ablutions, 'admit the worshipful envoys; they will now, I think, scarcely see that disease has made Richard negligent of his person.'

The celebrated Master of the Templars was a tall, thin, war-worn man, with a slow yet penetrating eye, and a brow on which a thousand dark intrigues had stamped a portion of their obscurity. At the head of that singular body, to whom their order was everything and their individuality nothing; seeking the advancement of its power, even at the hazard of that very religion which the fraternity were originally associated to protect; accused of heresy and witchcraft, although by their character Christian priests; suspected of secret league with the Soldan, though by oath devoted to the protection of the Holy Temple or its recovery — the whole order, and the whole personal character of its commander, or Grand Master, was a riddle, at the exposition of which most men shuddered. The Grand Master was dressed in his white robes of solemnity, and he bare the abacus, a mystic staff of office, the peculiar form of which has given rise to such singular conjectures and commentaries, leading to suspicions that this celebrated fraternity of Christian knights were embodied under the foulest symbols of paganism.

Conrade of Montserrat had a much more pleasing exterior

than the dark and mysterious priest-soldier by whom he was accompanied. He was a handsome man, of middle age, or something past that term, bold in the field, sagacious in council, gay and gallant in times of festivity; but, on the other hand, he was generally accused of versatility, of a narrow and selfish ambition, of a desire to extend his own principality without regard to the weal of the Latin kingdom of Palestine, and of seeking his own interest, by private negotiations with Saladin, to the prejudice of the Christian leaguers.

When the usual salutations had been made by these dignitaries, and courteously returned by King Richard, the Marquis of Montserrat commenced an explanation of the motives of their visit, sent, as he said they were, by the anxious kings and princes who composed the council of the Crusaders, 'to inquire into the health of their magnanimous ally, the valiant King of England.'

'We know the importance in which the princes of the council hold our health,' replied the English king; 'and are well aware how much they must have suffered by suppressing all curiosity concerning it for fourteen days, for fear, doubtless, of aggravating our disorder, by showing their anxiety regarding the event.'

The flow of the Marquis's eloquence being checked, and he himself thrown into some confusion by this reply, his more austere companion took up the thread of the conversation, and, with as much dry and brief gravity as was consistent with the presence which he addressed, informed the King that they came from the council, to pray, in the name of Christendom, 'that he would not suffer his health to be tampered with by an infidel physician, said to be despatched by Saladin, until the council had taken measures to remove or confirm the suspicion which they at present conceived did attach itself to the mission of such a person.'

'Grand Master of the Holy and Valiant Order of Knights Templars, and you, Most Noble Marquis of Montserrat,' replied Richard, 'if it please you to retire into the adjoining pavilion, you shall presently see what account we make of the tender remonstrances of our royal and princely colleagues in this religious warfare.'

The Marquis and Grand Master retired accordingly; nor had they been many minutes in the outward pavilion when the Eastern physician arrived, accompanied by the Baron of Gilsland and Kenneth of Scotland. The baron, however, was a

little later of entering the tent than the other two, stopping, perchance, to issue some orders to the warders without.

As the Arabian physician entered, he made his obeisance, after the Oriental fashion, to the Marquis and Grand Master, whose dignity was apparent, both from their appearance and their bearing. The Grand Master returned the salutation with an expression of disdainful coldness, the Marquis with the popular courtesy which he habitually practised to men of every rank and nation. There was a pause; for the Scottish knight, waiting for the arrival of De Vaux, presumed not, of his own authority, to enter the tent of the King of England, and, during this interval, the Grand Master sternly demanded of the Moslem, 'Infidel, hast thou the courage to practise thine art upon the person of an anointed sovereign of the Christian host?'

'The sun of Allah,' answered the sage, 'shines on the Nazarene as well as on the true believer, and His servant dare make no distinction betwixt them, when called on to exercise the art of healing.'

'Misbelieving Hakim,' said the Grand Master, 'or whatsoever they call thee for an unbaptized slave of darkness, dost thou well know that thou shalt be torn asunder by wild horses should King Richard die under thy charge?'

'That were hard justice,' answered the physician, 'seeing that I can but use human means, and that the issue is written in the book of light.'

'Nay, reverend and valiant Grand Master,' said the Marquis of Montserrat, 'consider that this learned man is not acquainted with our Christian order, adopted in the fear of God, and for the safety of His anointed. Be it known to thee, grave physician, whose skill we doubt not, that your wisest course is to repair to the presence of the illustrious council of our Holy League, and there to give account and reckoning to such wise and learned leeches as they shall nominate, concerning your means of process and cure of this illustrious patient; so shall you escape all the danger, which, rashly taking such a high matter upon your sole answer, you may else most likely incur.'

'My lords,' said El Hakim, 'I understand you well. But knowledge hath its champions as well as your military art, nay, hath sometimes had its martyrs as well as religion. I have the command of my sovereign, the Soldan Saladin, to heal this Nazarene king, and, with the blessing of the Prophet, I will obey his commands. If I fail, ye wear swords thirsting for the

blood of the faithful, and I proffer my body to your weapons. But I will not reason with one uncircumcised upon the virtue of the medicines of which I have obtained knowledge through the grace of the Prophet, and I pray you interpose no delay between me and my office.'

'Who talks of delay?' said the Baron de Vaux, hastily entering the tent; 'we have had but too much already. I salute you, my Lord of Montserrat, and you, valiant Grand Master. But I must presently pass with this learned physician to the bedside of my master.'

'My lord,' said the Marquis, in Norman-French, or the language of Oui, as it was then called, 'are you well advised that we came to expostulate, on the part of the council of the monarchs and princes of the Crusade, against the risk of permitting an infidel and Eastern physician to tamper with a health so valuable as that of your master King Richard?'

'Noble Lord Marquis,' replied the Englishman, bluntly, 'I can neither use many words nor do I delight in listening to them, moreover, I am much more ready to believe what my eyes have seen than what my ears have heard. I am satisfied that this heathen can cure the sickness of King Richard, and I believe and trust he will labour to do so. Time is precious. If Mohammed—may God's curse be on him!—stood at the door of the tent, with such fair purpose as this Adonbec el Hakim entertains, I would hold it sin to delay him for a minute. So, give ye gode'n, my lords.'

'Nay, but,' said Conrade of Montserrat, 'the King himself said we should be present when this same physician dealt upon him.'

The baron whispered the chamberlain, probably to know whether the Marquis spoke truly, and then replied, 'My lords, if you will hold your patience, you are welcome to enter with us; but if you interrupt, by action or threat, this accomplished physician in his duty, be it known that, without respect to your high quality, I will enforce your absence from Richard's tent; for know, I am so well satisfied of the virtue of this man's medicines, that were Richard himself to refuse them, by Our Lady of Lanercost, I think I could find in my heart to force him to take the means of his cure whether he would or no. Move on, El Hakim.'

The last word was spoken in the *lingua franca*, and instantly obeyed by the physician. The Grand Master looked grimly on the unceremonious old soldier, but, on exchanging a glance



with the Marquis, smoothed his frowning brow as well as he could, and both followed De Vaux and the Arabian into the inner tent, where Richard lay expecting them with that impatience with which the sick man watches the step of his physician. Sir Kenneth, whose attendance seemed neither asked nor prohibited, felt himself, by the circumstances in which he stood, entitled to follow these high dignitaries, but, conscious of his inferior power and rank, remained aloof during the scene which took place.

Richard, when they entered his apartment, immediately exclaimed, 'So ho! a goodly fellowship come to see Richard take his leap in the dark. My noble allies, I greet you as the representatives of our assembled league; Richard will again be amongst you in his former fashion, or ye shall bear to the grave what is left of him. De Vaux, lives he or dies he, thou hast the thanks of thy prince. There is yet another — but this fever hath wasted my eyesight. What, the bold Scot, who would climb Heaven without a ladder? He is welcome too. Come, sir Hakim, to the work — to the work.'

The physician, who had already informed himself of the various symptoms of the King's illness, now felt his pulse for a long time, and with deep attention, while all around stood silent and in breathless expectation. The sage next filled a cup with spring water, and dipt into it the small red purse, which, as formerly, he took from his bosom. When he seemed to think it sufficiently medicated, he was about to offer it to the sovereign, who prevented him, by saying, 'Hold an instant. Thou hast felt my pulse, let me lay my finger on thine. I too, as becomes a good knight, know something of thine art.'

The Arabian yielded his hand without hesitation, and his long slender dark fingers were, for an instant, inclosed, and almost buried, in the large enfoldment of King Richard's hand.

'His blood beats calm as an infant's,' said the King; 'so throb not theirs who poison princes. De Vaux, whether we live or die, dismiss this Hakim with honour and safety. Commend us, friend, to the noble Saladin. Should I die, it is without doubt of his faith; should I live, it will be to thank him as a warrior would desire to be thanked.'

He then raised himself in bed, took the cup in his hand, and, turning to the Marquis and the Grand Master — 'Mark what I say, and let my royal brethren pledge me in Cyprus wine — "To the immortal honour of the first Crusader who shall strike lance or sword on the gate of Jerusalem; and to

the shame and eternal infamy of whomsoever shall turn back from the plough on which he hath laid his hand ! ” ”

He drained the cup to the bottom, resigned it to the Arabian, and sunk back, as if exhausted, upon the cushions which were arranged to receive him. The physician, then, with silent but expressive signs, directed that all should leave the tent excepting himself and De Vaux, whom no remonstrance could induce to withdraw. The apartment was cleared accordingly.

## CHAPTER X

And now I will unclasp a secret book,  
And, to your quick-conceiving discontent,  
I'll read you matter deep and dangerous.

*Henry IV. Part I.*

THE Marquis of Montserrat and the Grand Master of the Knights Templars stood together in the front of the royal pavilion, within which this singular scene had passed, and beheld a strong guard of bills and bows drawn out to form a circle around it, and keep at distance all which might disturb the sleeping monarch. The soldiers wore the downcast, silent, and sullen looks with which they trail their arms at a funeral, and stepped with such caution that you could not hear a buckler ring or a sword clatter, though so many men in armour were moving around the tent. They lowered their weapons in deep reverence as the dignitaries passed through their files, but with the same profound silence.

'There is a change of cheer among these island dogs,' said the Grand Master to Conrade, when they had passed Richard's Guards. 'What hoarse tumult and revel used to be before this pavilion! nought but pitching the bar, hurling the ball, wrestling, roaring of songs, clattering of wine-pots, and quaffing of flagons among these burly yeomen, as if they were holding some country wake, with a Maypole in the midst of them instead of a royal standard.'

'Mastiffs are a faithful race,' said Conrade; 'and the King their master has won their love by being ready to wrestle, brawl, or revel amongst the foremost of them, whenever the humour seized him.'

'He is totally compounded of humours,' said the Grand Master. 'Marked you the pledge he gave us, instead of a prayer, over his grace-cup yonder?'

'He would have felt it a grace-cup, and a well-spiced one too,' said the Marquis, 'were Saladin like any other Turk that

ever wore turban or turned him to Mecca at call of the muezzin. But he affects faith, and honour, and generosity, as if it were for an unbaptized dog like him to practise the virtuous bearing of a Christian knight. It is said he hath applied to Richard to be admitted within the pale of chivalry.'

'By St. Bernard!' exclaimed the Grand Master, 'it were time then to throw off our belts and spurs, Sir Conrade, deface our armorial bearings, and renounce our burgonets, if the highest honour of Christianity were conferred on an unchristened Turk of tenpence.'

'You rate the Soldan cheap,' replied the Marquis; 'yet, though he be a likely man, I have seen a better heathen sold for forty pence at the bagnio.'

They were now near their horses, which stood at some distance from the royal tent, prancing among the gallant train of esquires and pages by whom they were attended, when Conrade, after a moment's pause, proposed that they should enjoy the coolness of the evening breeze which had arisen, and, dismissing their steeds and attendants, walk homewards to their own quarters, through the lines of the extended Christian camp. The Grand Master assented, and they proceeded to walk together accordingly, avoiding, as if by mutual consent, the more inhabited parts of the canvas city, and tracing the broad esplanade which lay between the tents and the external defences, where they could converse in private, and unmarked, save by the sentinels as they passed them.

They spoke for a time upon the military points and preparations for defence; but this sort of discourse, in which neither seemed to take interest, at length died away, and there was a long pause, which terminated by the Marquis of Montserrat stopping short, like a man who has formed a sudden resolution, and, gazing for some moments on the dark, inflexible countenance of the Grand Master, he at length addressed him thus: 'Might it consist with your valour and sanctity, reverend Sir Giles Amaury, I would pray you for once to lay aside the dark vizor which you wear and to converse with a friend barefaced.'

The Templar half-smiled. 'There are light-coloured masks,' he said, 'as well as dark vizors, and the one conceals the natural features as completely as the other.'

'Be it so,' said the Marquis, putting his hand to his chin, and withdrawing it with the action of one who unmask himself; 'there lies my disguise. And now, what think you, as

touching the interests of your own order, of the prospects of this Crusade?’

‘This is tearing the veil from *my* thoughts, rather than exposing your own,’ said the Grand Master; ‘yet I will reply with a parable told to me by a santan of the desert. “A certain farmer prayed to Heaven for rain, and murmured when it fell not at his need. To punish his impatience, Allah,” said the santan, “sent the Euphrates upon his farm, and he was destroyed with all his possessions, even by the granting of his own wishes.”’

‘Most truly spoken,’ said the Marquis Conrade; ‘would that the ocean had swallowed up nineteen parts of the armaments of these Western princes! What remained would better have served the purpose of the Christian nobles of Palestine, the wretched remnant of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem. Left to ourselves, we might have bent to the storm, or, moderately supported with money and troops, we might have compelled Saladin to respect our valour, and grant us peace and protection on easy terms. But, from the extremity of danger with which this powerful Crusade threatens the Soldan, we cannot suppose, should it pass over, that the Saracen will suffer any one of us to hold possessions or principalities in Syria, far less permit the existence of the Christian military fraternities, from whom they have experienced so much mischief.’

‘Ay, but,’ said the Templar, ‘these adventurous Crusaders may succeed, and again plant the cross on the bulwarks of Zion.’

‘And what will that advantage either the Order of the Templars or Conrade of Montserrat?’ said the Marquis.

‘You it may advantage,’ replied the Grand Master. ‘Conrade of Montserrat might become Conrade King of Jerusalem.’

‘That sounds like something,’ said the Marquis, ‘and yet it rings but hollow. Godfrey of Bouillon might well choose the crown of thorns for his emblem. Grand Master, I will confess to you I have caught some attachment to the Eastern form of government. A pure and simple monarchy should consist but of king and subjects. Such is the simple and primitive structure—a shepherd and his flock. All this internal chain of feudal dependence is artificial and sophisticated, and I would rather hold the baton of my poor marquisate with a firm gripe, and wield it after my pleasure, than the sceptre of a monarch, to be in effect restrained and curbed by the will of as many



proud feudal barons as hold land under the Assize of Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup> A king should tread freely, Grand Master, and should not be controlled by here a ditch and there a fence, here a feudal privilege and there a mail-clad baron with his sword in his hand to maintain it. To sum the whole, I am aware that Guy de Lusignan's claims to the throne would be preferred to mine, if Richard recovers and has aught to say in the choice.'

'Enough,' said the Grand Master; 'thou hast indeed convinced me of thy sincerity. Others may hold the same opinions, but few, save Conrade of Montserrat, dared frankly avow that he desires not the restitution of the kingdom of Jerusalem, but rather prefers being master of a portion of its fragments, like the barbarous islanders, who labour not for the deliverance of a goodly vessel from the billows, expecting rather to enrich themselves at the expense of the wreck.'

'Thou wilt not betray my counsel?' said Conrade, looking sharply and suspiciously. 'Know, for certain, that my tongue shall never wrong my head, nor my hand forsake the defence of either. Impeach me if thou wilt: I am prepared to defend myself in the lists against the best Templar who ever laid lance in rest.'

'Yet thou start'st somewhat suddenly for so bold a steed,' said the Grand Master. 'However, I swear to thee by the Holy Temple, which our order is sworn to defend, that I will keep counsel with thee as a true comrade.'

'By which temple?' said the Marquis of Montserrat, whose love of sarcasm often outran his policy and discretion; 'swearest thou by that on the hill of Zion, which was built by King Solomon, or by that symbolical, emblematical edifice which is said to be spoken of in the councils held in the vaults of your preceptories, as something which infers the aggrandisement of thy valiant and venerable order?'

The Templar scowled upon him with an eye of death, but answered calmly, 'By whatever temple I swear, be assured, Lord Marquis, my oath is sacred. I would I knew how to bind *thee* by one of equal obligation.'

'I will swear truth to thee,' said the Marquis, laughing, 'by the earl's coronet, which I hope to convert, ere these wars are over, into something better. It feels cold on my brow, that same slight coronet; a duke's cap of maintenance were a better protection against such a night-breeze as now blows, and a king's crown more preferable still, being lined with comfortable

<sup>1</sup> See Assisses de Jerusalem. Note 6.

ermine and velvet. In a word, our interests bind us together ; for think not, Lord Grand Master, that, were these allied princes to regain Jerusalem, and place a king of their own choosing there, they would suffer your order, any more than my poor marquise, to retain the independence which we now hold. No, by Our Lady ! In such case, the proud Knights of St. John must again spread plasters and dress plague-sores in the hospitals ; and you, most puissant and venerable Knights of the Temple, must return to your condition of simple men-at-arms, sleep three on a pallet, and mount two upon one horse, as your present seal still expresses to have been your ancient most simple custom.'

'The rank, privileges, and opulence of our order prevent so much degradation as you threaten,' said the Templar, haughtily.

'These are your bane,' said Conrade of Montserrat ; 'and you, as well as I, reverend Grand Master, know that, were the allied princes to be successful in Palestine, it would be their first point of policy to abate the independence of your order, which, but for the protection of our holy father the Pope, and the necessity of employing your valour in the conquest of Palestine, you would long since have experienced. Give them complete success, and you will be flung aside, as the splinters of a broken lance are tossed out of the tilt-yard.'

'There may be truth in what you say,' said the Templar, darkly smiling ; 'but what were our hopes should the allies withdraw their forces, and leave Palestine in the grasp of Saladin ?'

'Great and assured,' replied Conrade : 'the Soldan would give large provinces to maintain at his behest a body of well-appointed Frankish lances. In Egypt, in Persia, an hundred such auxiliaries, joined to his own light cavalry, would turn the battle against the most fearful odds. This dependence would be but for a time, perhaps during the life of this enterprising Soldan ; but, in the East, empires arise like mushrooms. Suppose him dead, and us strengthened with a constant succession of fiery and adventurous spirits from Europe, what might we not hope to achieve, uncontrolled by these monarchs, whose dignity throws us at present into the shade, and, were they to remain here and succeed in this expedition, would willingly consign us for ever to degradation and dependence ?'

'You say well, my Lord Marquis,' said the Grand Master ; 'and your words find an echo in my bosom. Yet must we be cautious : Philip of France is wise as well as valiant.'

‘True, and will be therefore the more easily diverted from an expedition to which, in a moment of enthusiasm, or urged by his nobles, he rashly bound himself. He is jealous of King Richard, his natural enemy, and longs to return to prosecute plans of ambition nearer to Paris than Palestine. Any fair pretence will serve him for withdrawing from a scene in which he is aware he is wasting the force of his kingdom.’

‘And the Duke of Austria?’ said the Templar.

‘Oh, touching the Duke,’ returned Conrade, ‘his self-conceit and folly lead him to the same conclusions as do Philip’s policy and wisdom. He conceives himself, God help the while, ungratefully treated, because men’s mouths, even those of his own *minnesingers*, are filled with the praises of King Richard, whom he fears and hates, and in whose harm he would rejoice, like those unbred dastardly curs, who, if the foremost of the pack is hurt by the gripe of the wolf, are much more likely to assail the sufferer from behind than to come to his assistance. But wherefore tell I this to thee, save to show that I am in sincerity in desiring that this league be broken up, and the country freed of these great monarchs with their hosts? And thou well knowest, and hast thyself seen, how all the princes of influence and power, one alone excepted, are eager to enter into treaty with the Soldan.’

‘I acknowledge it,’ said the Templar: ‘he were blind that had not seen this in their last deliberations. But lift yet thy mask an inch higher, and tell me thy real reason for pressing upon the council that Northern Englishman, or Scot, or whatever you call yonder Knight of the Leopard, to carry their proposals for a treaty?’

‘There was a policy in it,’ replied the Italian: ‘his character of native of Britain was sufficient to meet what Saladin required, who knew him to belong to the band of Richard, while his character of Scot, and certain other personal grudges which I wot of, rendered it most unlikely that our envoy should, on his return, hold any communication with the sick-bed of Richard, to whom his presence was ever unacceptable.’

‘Oh, too fine-spun policy,’ said the Grand Master; ‘trust me, that Italian spiders’ webs will never bind this unshorn Samson of the isle; well if you can do it with new cords, and those of the toughest. See you not that the envoy whom you have selected so carefully hath brought us, in this physician, the means of restoring the lion-hearted, bull-necked Englishman, to prosecute his Crusading enterprise; and, so soon as he

is able once more to rush on, which of the princes dare hold back? They must follow him for very shame, although they would march under the banner of Satan as soon.'

'Be content,' said Conrade of Montserrat; 'ere this physician, if he work by anything short of miraculous agency, can accomplish Richard's cure, it may be possible to put some open rupture betwixt the Frenchman, at least the Austrian, and his allies of England, so that the breach shall be irreconcilable; and Richard may arise from his bed perhaps to command his own native troops, but never again, by his sole energy, to wield the force of the whole Crusade.'

'Thou art a willing archer,' said the Templar; 'but, Conrade of Montserrat, thy bow is over-slack to carry an arrow to the mark.'

He then stopt short, cast a suspicious glance to see that no one overheard him, and taking Conrade by the hand, pressed it eagerly as he looked the Italian in the face, and repeated slowly: 'Richard arise from his bed, say'st thou? Conrade, he must never arise!'

The Marquis of Montserrat started. 'What! spoke you of Richard of England — of Cœur-de-Lion — the champion of Christendom?'

His cheek turned pale and his knees trembled as he spoke. The Templar looked at him, with his iron visage contorted into a smile of contempt.

'Know'st thou what thou look'st like, Sir Conrade, at this moment? Not like the politic and valiant Marquis of Montserrat — not like him who would direct the council of princes and determine the fate of empires; but like a novice who, stumbling upon a conjuration in his master's book of gramarye, has raised the devil when he least thought of it, and now stands terrified at the spirit which appears before him.'

'I grant you,' said Conrade, recovering himself, 'that, unless some other sure road could be discovered, thou hast hinted at that which leads most direct to our purpose. But, blessed Mary! we shall become the curse of all Europe, the malediction of every one, from the Pope on his throne to the very beggar at the church gate, who, ragged and leprous, in the last extremity of human wretchedness, shall bless himself that he is neither Giles Amaury nor Conrade of Montserrat.'

'If thou takest it thus,' said the Grand Master, with the same composure which characterised him all through this remarkable dialogue, 'let us hold there has nothing passed

between us — that we have spoken in our sleep — have awakened, and the vision is gone.'

'It never can depart,' answered Conrade.

'Visions of ducal crowns and kingly diadems are, indeed, somewhat tenacious of their place in the imagination,' replied the Grand Master.

'Well,' answered Conrade, 'let me but first try to break peace between Austria and England.'

They parted. Conrade remained standing still upon the spot, and watching the flowing white cloak of the Templar, as he stalked slowly away, and gradually disappeared amid the fast-sinking darkness of the Oriental night. Proud, ambitious, unscrupulous, and politic, the Marquis of Montserrat was yet not cruel by nature. He was a voluptuary and an epicurean, and, like many who profess this character, was averse, even upon selfish motives, from inflicting pain, or witnessing acts of cruelty; and he retained also a general sense of respect for his own reputation, which sometimes supplies the want of the better principle by which reputation is to be maintained.

'I have,' he said, as his eyes still watched the point at which he had seen the last slight wave of the Templar's mantle — 'I have, in truth, raised the devil with a vengeance! Who would have thought this stern ascetic Grand Master, whose whole fortune and misfortune is merged in that of his order, would be willing to do more for its advancement than I who labour for my own interest? To check this wild Crusade was my motive, indeed, but I durst not think on the ready mode which this determined priest has dared to suggest; yet it is the surest, perhaps even the safest.'

Such were the Marquis's meditations, when his muttered soliloquy was broken by a voice from a little distance, which proclaimed with the emphatic tone of a herald — 'Remember the Holy Sepulchre!'

The exhortation was echoed from post to post, for it was the duty of the sentinels to raise this cry from time to time upon their periodical watch, that the host of the Crusaders might always have in their remembrance the purpose of their being in arms. But though Conrade was familiar with the custom, and had heard the warning voice on all former occasions as a matter of habit; yet it came at the present moment so strongly in contact with his own train of thought, that it seemed a voice from Heaven warning him against the iniquity which his heart meditated. He looked around anxiously, as if, like the



patriarch of old, though from very different circumstances, he was expecting some ram caught in a thicket — some substitution for the sacrifice which his comrade proposed to offer, not to the Supreme Being, but to the Moloch of their own ambition. As he looked, the broad folds of the ensign of England, heavily distending itself to the failing night-breeze, caught his eye. It was displayed upon an artificial mound, nearly in the midst of the camp, which perhaps of old some Hebrew chief or champion had chosen as a memorial of his place of rest. If so, the name was now forgotten, and the Crusaders had christened it St. George's Mount, because from that commanding height the banner of England was supereminently displayed, as if an emblem of sovereignty over the many distinguished, noble, and even royal, ensigns which floated in lower situations.

A quick intellect like that of Conrade catches ideas from the glance of a moment. A single look on the standard seemed to dispel the uncertainty of mind which had affected him. He walked to his pavilion with the hasty and determined step of one who has adopted a plan which he is resolved to achieve, dismissed the almost princely train who waited to attend him, and, as he committed himself to his couch, muttered his amended resolution, that the milder means are to be tried before the more desperate are resorted to.

'To-morrow,' he said, 'I sit at the board of the Archduke of Austria; we will see what can be done to advance our purpose, before prosecuting the dark suggestions of this Templar.'

## CHAPTER XI

One thing is certain in our Northern land,  
Allow that birth, or valour, wealth, or wit,  
Give each precedence to their possessor,  
Envy, that follows on such eminence,  
As comes the lyme-hound on the roebuck's trace,  
Shall pull them down each one.

SIR DAVID LINDSAY.

LEOPOLD, Grand Duke of Austria, was the first possessor of that noble country to whom the princely rank belonged. He had been raised to the ducal sway in the German empire on account of his near relationship to the Emperor, Henry the Stern, and held under his government the finest provinces which are watered by the Danube. His character has been stained in history on account of one action of violence and perfidy, which arose out of these very transactions in the Holy Land; and yet the shame of having made Richard a prisoner, when he returned through his dominions, unattended and in disguise, was not one which flowed from Leopold's natural disposition. He was rather a weak and a vain than an ambitious or tyrannical prince. His mental powers resembled the qualities of his person. He was tall, strong, and handsome, with a complexion in which red and white were strongly contrasted, and had long flowing locks of fair hair. But there was an awkwardness in his gait, which seemed as if his size was not animated by energy sufficient to put in motion such a mass; and in the same manner, wearing the richest dresses, it always seemed as if they became him not. As a prince, he appeared too little familiar with his own dignity, and being often at a loss how to assert his authority when the occasion demanded it, he frequently thought himself obliged to recover, by acts and expressions of ill-timed violence, the ground which might have been easily and gracefully maintained by a little more presence of mind in the beginning of the controversy.

Not only were these deficiencies visible to others, but the

Archduke himself could not but sometimes entertain a painful consciousness that he was not altogether fit to maintain and assert the high rank which he had acquired ; and to this was joined the strong, and sometimes the just, suspicion that others esteemed him lightly accordingly.

When he first joined the Crusade, with a most princely attendance, Leopold had desired much to enjoy the friendship and intimacy of Richard, and had made such advances towards cultivating his regard as the King of England ought, in policy, to have received and answered. But the Archduke, though not deficient in bravery, was so infinitely inferior to Cœur-de-Lion in that ardour of mind which wooed danger as a bride, that the King very soon held him in a certain degree of contempt. Richard, also, as a Norman prince, a people with whom temperance was habitual, despised the inclination of the German for the pleasures of the table, and particularly his liberal indulgence in the use of wine. For these and other personal reasons the King of England very soon looked upon the Austrian prince with feelings of contempt, which he was at no pains to conceal or modify, and which, therefore, were speedily remarked, and returned with deep hatred, by the suspicious Leopold. The discord between them was fanned by the secret and politic arts of Philip of France, one of the most sagacious monarchs of the time, who, dreading the fiery and overbearing character of Richard, considering him as his natural rival, and feeling offended, moreover, at the dictatorial manner in which he, a vassal of France for his continental domains, conducted himself towards his liege lord, endeavoured to strengthen his own party, and weaken that of Richard, by uniting the Crusading princes of inferior degree in resistance to what he termed the usurping authority of the King of England. Such was the state of politics and opinions entertained by the Archduke of Austria, when Conrade of Montserrat resolved upon employing his jealousy of England as the means of dissolving, or loosening at least, the league of the Crusaders.

The time which he chose for his visit was noon, and the pretence, to present the Archduke with some choice Cyprus wine which had lately fallen into his hands, and discuss its comparative merits with those of Hungary and of the Rhine. An intimation of his purpose was of course answered by a courteous invitation to partake of the archducal meal, and every effort was used to render it fitting the splendour of a

sovereign prince. Yet the refined taste of the Italian saw more cumbrous profusion than elegance or splendour in the display of provisions under which the board groaned.

The Germans, though still possessing the martial and frank character of their ancestors, who subdued the Roman empire, had retained withal no slight tinge of their barbarism. The practices and principles of chivalry were not carried to such a nice pitch amongst them as amongst the French and English knights, nor were they strict observers of the prescribed rules of society, which among those nations were supposed to express the height of civilisation. Sitting at the table of the Archduke, Conrade was at once stunned and amused with the clang of Teutonic sounds assailing his ears on all sides, notwithstanding the solemnity of a princely banquet. Their dress seemed equally fantastic to him, many of the Austrian nobles retaining their long beards, and almost all of them wearing short jerkins of various colours, cut, and flourished, and fringed in a manner not common in Western Europe.

Numbers of dependants, old and young, attended in the pavilion, mingled at times in the conversation, received from their masters the relics of the entertainment, and devoured them as they stood behind the backs of the company. Jesters, dwarfs, and minstrels were there in unusual numbers, and more noisy and intrusive than they were permitted to be in better-regulated society. As they were allowed to share freely in the wine, which flowed round in large quantities, their licensed tumult was the more excessive.

All this while, and in the midst of a clamour and confusion which would better have become a German tavern during a fair than the tent of a sovereign prince, the Archduke was waited upon with a minuteness of form and observance which showed how anxious he was to maintain rigidly the state and character to which his elevation had entitled him. He was served on the knee, and only by pages of noble blood, fed upon plate of silver, and drank his Tokay and Rhenish wines from a cup of gold. His ducal mantle was splendidly adorned with ermine, his coronet might have equalled in value a royal crown, and his feet, cased in velvet shoes, the length of which, peaks included, might be two feet, rested upon a footstool of solid silver. But it served partly to intimate the character of the man, that, although desirous to show attention to the Marquis of Montserrat, whom he had courteously placed at his right hand, he gave much more of his attention to his *spruchspracher*,

that is, his man of conversation, or 'sayer of sayings,' who stood behind the Duke's right shoulder.

This personage was well attired, in a cloak and doublet of black velvet, the last of which was decorated with various silver and gold coins, stitched upon it, in memory of the munificent princes who had conferred them, and bearing a short staff, to which also bunches of silver coins were attached by rings, which he jingled by way of attracting attention, when he was about to say anything which he judged worthy of it. This person's capacity in the household of the Archduke was somewhat betwixt that of a minstrel and a counsellor: he was by turns a flatterer, a poet, and an orator; and those who desired to be well with the Duke generally studied to gain the goodwill of the *spruchsprecher*.

Lest too much of this officer's wisdom should become tiresome, the Duke's other shoulder was occupied by his *hoffnarr*, or court jester, called Jonas Schwanker, who made almost as much noise with his fool's cap, bells, and bauble as did the orator, or man of talk, with his jingling baton.

These two personages threw out grave and comic nonsense alternately, while their master, laughing or applauding them himself, yet carefully watched the countenance of his noble guest, to discern what impressions so accomplished a cavalier received from this display of Austrian eloquence and wit. It is hard to say whether the man of wisdom or the man of folly contributed most to the amusement of the party, or stood highest in the estimation of their princely master; but the sallies of both seemed excellently well received. Sometimes they became rivals for the conversation, and clanged their flappers in emulation of each other, with a most alarming contention; but, in general, they seemed on such good terms, and so accustomed to support each other's play, that the *spruchsprecher* often condescended to follow up the jester's witticisms with an explanation, to render them more obvious to the capacity of the audience; so that his wisdom became a sort of commentary on the buffoon's folly. And sometimes, in requital, the *hoffnarr*, with a pithy jest, wound up the conclusion of the orator's tedious harangue.

Whatever his real sentiments might be, Conrade took especial care that his countenance should express nothing but satisfaction with what he heard, and smiled or applauded as zealously, to all appearance, as the Archduke himself, at the solemn folly of the *spruchsprecher* and the gibbering wit of the fool. In fact, he watched carefully until the one or other should intro-



duce some topic favourable to the purpose which was uppermost in his mind.

It was not long ere the King of England was brought on the carpet by the jester, who had been accustomed to consider Dickon of the Broom, which irreverent epithet he substituted for Richard Plantagenet, as a subject of mirth acceptable and inexhaustible. The orator, indeed, was silent, and it was only when applied to by Conrade that he observed, 'The *genista*, or broom-plant, was an emblem of humility ; and it would be well when those who wore it would remember the warning.'

The allusion to the illustrious badge of Plantagenet was thus rendered sufficiently manifest, and Jonas Schwanker observed that 'they who humbled themselves had been exalted with a vengeance.'

'Honour unto whom honour is due,' answered the Marquis of Montserrat : 'we have all had some part in these marches and battles, and methinks other princes might share a little in the renown which Richard of England engrosses amongst minstrels and *minnesingers*. Has no one of the *joyeuse science* here present a song in praise of the royal Archduke of Austria, our princely entertainer ?'

Three minstrels emulously stepped forward with voice and harp. Two were silenced with difficulty by the *spruchspracher*, who seemed to act as master of the revels, and a hearing was at length procured for the poet preferred, who sung, in High German, stanzas which may be thus translated :—

'What brave chief shall head the forces,  
Where the red-cross legions gather ?  
Best of horsemen, best of horses,  
Highest head and fairest feather.'

Here the orator, jingling his staff, interrupted the bard to intimate to the party, what they might not have inferred from the description, that their royal host was the party indicated, and a full crowned goblet went round to the acclamation—'*Hoch lebe der Herzog Leopold !*'

Another stanza followed :

'Ask not Austria why, midst princes,  
Still her banner rises highest ;  
Ask as well the strong-wing'd eagle,  
Why to Heaven he soars the nighest.'

'The eagle,' said the expounder of dark sayings, 'is the cognizance of our noble lord the Archduke — of his royal Grace,

I would say — and the eagle flies the highest and nearest to the sun of all the feathered creation.'

'The lion hath taken a spring above the eagle,' said Conrade, carelessly.

The Archduke reddened, and fixed his eyes on the speaker, while the *spruchspracher* answered, after a minute's consideration, 'The Lord Marquis will pardon me — a lion cannot fly above an eagle, because no lion hath got wings.'

'Except the lion of St. Mark,' responded the jester.

'That is the Venetian's banner,' said the Duke; 'but assuredly that amphibious race, half nobles, half merchants, will not dare to place their rank in comparison with ours?'

'Nay, it was not of the Venetian lion that I spoke,' said the Marquis of Montserrat; 'but of the three lions passant of England; formerly, it is said, they were leopards, but now they are become lions at all points, and must take precedence of beast, fish, or fowl, or woe worth the gainstander.'

'Mean you seriously, my lord?' said the Austrian, now considerably flushed with wine — 'think you that Richard of England asserts any pre-eminence over the free sovereigns who have been his voluntary allies in this Crusade?'

'I know not but from circumstances,' answered Conrade: 'yonder hangs his banner alone in the midst of our camp, as if he were king and generalissimo of our whole Christian army.'

'And do you endure this so patiently, and speak of it so coldly?' said the Archduke.

'Nay, my lord,' answered Conrade, 'it cannot concern the poor Marquis of Montserrat to contend against an injury patiently submitted to by such potent princes as Philip of France and Leopold of Austria. What dishonour you are pleased to submit to cannot be a disgrace to me.'

Leopold closed his fist and struck on the table with violence.

'I have told Philip of this,' he said — 'I have often told him that it was our duty to protect the inferior princes against the usurpation of this islander; but he answers me ever with cold respects of their relations together as suzerain and vassal, and that it were impolitic in him to make an open breach at this time and period.'

'The world knows that Philip is wise,' said Conrade, 'and will judge his submission to be policy. Yours, my lord, you can yourself alone account for; but I doubt not you have deep reasons for submitting to English domination.'

'I submit!' said Leopold, indignantly — 'I, the Archduke of Austria, so important and vital a limb of the Holy Roman empire — I submit myself to this king of half an island — this grandson of a Norman bastard! No, by Heaven! The camp, and all Christendom, shall see that I know how to right myself, and whether I yield ground one inch to the English bandog. Up, my lieges and merry men — up and follow me! We will — and that without losing one instant — place the eagle of Austria where she shall float as high as ever floated the cognizance of king or kaiser.'

With that he started from his seat, and, amidst the tumultuous cheering of his guests and followers, made for the door of the pavilion, and seized his own banner, which stood pitched before it.

'Nay, my lord,' said Conrade, affecting to interfere, 'it will blemish your wisdom to make an affray in the camp at this hour, and perhaps it is better to submit to the usurpation of England a little longer than to ——'

'Not an hour — not a moment longer,' vociferated the Duke; and, with the banner in his hand, and followed by his shouting guests and attendants, marched hastily to the central mount, from which the banner of England floated, and laid his hand on the standard-spear, as if to pluck it from the ground.

'My master — my dear master,' said Jonas Schwanker, throwing his arms about the Duke, 'take heed — lions have teeth ——'

'And eagles have claws,' said the Duke, not relinquishing his hold on the banner-staff, yet hesitating to pull it from the ground.

The speaker of sentences, notwithstanding such was his occupation, had, nevertheless, some intervals of sound sense. He clashed his staff loudly, and Leopold, as if by habit, turned his head towards his man of counsel.

'The eagle is king among the fowls of the air,' said the *spruchsprecher*, 'as is the lion among the beasts of the field: each has his dominion, separated as wide as England and Germany; do thou, noble eagle, no dishonour to the princely lion, but let your banners remain floating in peace side by side.'

Leopold withdrew his hand from the banner-spear, and looked round for Conrade of Montserrat, but he saw him not; for the Marquis, so soon as he saw the mischief afoot, had withdrawn himself from the crowd, taking care, in the first place, to express before several neutral persons his regret that the Archduke should have chosen the hours after dinner to avenge

any wrong of which he might think he had a right to complain. Not seeing his guest, to whom he wished more particularly to have addressed himself, the Archduke said aloud, that, having no wish to breed dissension in the army of the Cross, he did but vindicate his own privileges and right to stand upon an equality with the King of England, without desiring, as he might have done, to advance his banner, which he derived from emperors, his progenitors, above that of a mere descendant of the Counts of Anjou; and, in the meantime, he commanded a cask of wine to be brought hither and pierced, for regaling the bystanders, who, with tuck of drum and sound of music, quaffed many a carouse round the Austrian standard.

This disorderly scene was not acted without a degree of noise which alarmed the whole camp.

The critical hour had arrived at which the physician, according to the rules of his art, had predicted that his royal patient might be awakened with safety, and the sponge had been applied for that purpose; and the leech had not made many observations ere he assured the Baron of Gilsland that the fever had entirely left his sovereign, and that, such was the happy strength of his constitution, it would not be even necessary, as in most cases, to give a second dose of the powerful medicine. Richard himself seemed to be of the same opinion, for, sitting up and rubbing his eyes, he demanded of De Vaux what present sum of money was in the royal coffers.

The baron could not exactly inform him of the amount.

‘It matters not,’ said Richard; ‘be it greater or smaller, bestow it all on this learned leech, who hath, I trust, given me back again to the service of the Crusade. If it be less than a thousand byzants, let him have jewels to make it up.’

‘I sell not the wisdom with which Allah has endowed me,’ answered the Arabian physician; ‘and be it known to you, great prince, that the divine medicine of which you have partaken would lose its effects in my unworthy hands, did I exchange its virtues either for gold or diamonds.’

‘The physician refuseth a gratuity!’ said De Vaux to himself. ‘This is more extraordinary than his being an hundred years old.’

‘Thomas de Vaux,’ said Richard, ‘thou knowest no courage but what belongs to the sword, no bounty and virtue but what are used in chivalry; I tell thee that this Moor, in his independence, might set an example to them who account themselves the flower of knighthood.’

'It is reward enough for me,' said the Moor, folding his arms on his bosom, and maintaining an attitude at once respectful and dignified, 'that so great a king as the Melech Ric<sup>1</sup> should thus speak of his servant. But now, let me pray you again to compose yourself on your couch; for though I think there needs no farther repetition of the divine draught, yet injury might ensue from any too early exertion, ere your strength be entirely restored.'

'I must obey thee, Hakim,' said the King; 'yet, believe me, my bosom feels so free from the wasting fire which for so many days hath scorched it that I care not how soon I expose it to a brave man's lance. But hark! what mean these shouts and that distant music in the camp? Go, Thomas de Vaux, and make inquiry.'

'It is the Archduke Leopold,' said De Vaux, returning after a minute's absence, 'who makes with his pot-companions some procession through the camp.'

'The drunken fool!' exclaimed King Richard, 'can he not keep his brutal inebriety within the veil of his pavilion, that he must needs show his shame to all Christendom? What say you, sir Marquis?' he added, addressing himself to Conrade of Montserrat, who at that moment entered the tent.

'Thus much, honoured prince,' answered the Marquis, 'that I delight to see your Majesty so well and so far recovered; and that is a long speech for any one to make who has partaken of the Duke of Austria's hospitality.'

'What! you have been dining with the Teutonic wine-skin,' said the monarch; 'and what frolic has he found out to cause all this disturbance? Truly, Sir Conrade, I have still held you so good a reveller, that I wonder at your quitting the game.'

De Vaux, who had got a little behind the King, now exerted himself, by look and sign, to make the Marquis understand that he should say nothing to Richard of what was passing without.

But Conrade understood not, or heeded not, the prohibition. 'What the Archduke does,' he said, 'is of little consequence to any one, least of all to himself, since he probably knows not what he is acting; yet, to say truth, it is a gambol I should not like to share in, since he is pulling down the banner of England from St. George's Mount in the centre of the camp yonder, and displaying his own in its stead.'

'WHAT say'st thou?' exclaimed the King, in a tone which might have waked the dead.

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<sup>1</sup> Richard was thus called by the Eastern nations.



‘Nay,’ said the Marquis, ‘let it not chafe your Highness that a fool should act according to his folly ——’

‘Speak not to me,’ said Richard, springing from his couch, and casting on his clothes with a despatch which seemed marvellous — ‘speak not to me, Lord Marquis! De Multon, I command thee speak not a word to me: he that breathes but a syllable is no friend to Richard Plantagenet. Hakim, be silent, I charge thee!’

All this while the King was hastily clothing himself, and, with the last word, snatched his sword from the pillar of the tent, and without any other weapon, or calling any attendance, he rushed out of his pavilion. Conrade, holding up his hands, as if in astonishment, seemed willing to enter into conversation with De Vaux, but Sir Thomas pushed rudely past him, and calling to one of the royal equerries, said hastily, ‘Fly to Lord Salisbury’s quarters, and let him get his men together, and follow me instantly to St. George’s Mount. Tell him the King’s fever has left his blood and settled in his brain.’

Imperfectly heard, and still more imperfectly comprehended, by the startled attendant whom De Vaux addressed thus hastily, the equerry and his fellow-servants of the royal chamber rushed hastily into the tents of the neighbouring nobility, and quickly spread an alarm, as general as the cause seemed vague, through the whole British forces. The English soldiers, waked in alarm from that noon-day rest which the heat of the climate had taught them to enjoy as a luxury, hastily asked each other the cause of the tumult, and, without waiting an answer, supplied by the force of their own fancy the want of information. Some said the Saracens were in the camp, some that the King’s life was attempted, some that he had died of the fever the preceding night, many that he was assassinated by the Duke of Austria. The nobles and officers, at an equal loss with the common men to ascertain the real cause of the disorder, laboured only to get their followers under arms and under authority, lest their rashness should occasion some great misfortune to the Crusading army. The English trumpets sounded loud, shrill, and continuously. The alarm-cry of ‘Bows and bills — bows and bills!’ was heard from quarter to quarter, again and again shouted, and again and again answered by the presence of the ready warriors, and their national invocation, ‘St. George for merry England!’

The alarm went through the nearest quarter of the camp, and men of all the various nations assembled, where, perhaps, every people in Christendom had their representatives, flew

to arms, and drew together under circumstances of general confusion, of which they knew neither the cause nor the object. It was, however, lucky, amid a scene so threatening, that the Earl of Salisbury, while he hurried after De Vaux's summons, with a few only of the readiest English men-at-arms, directed the rest of the English host to be drawn up and kept under arms, to advance to Richard's succour if necessity should require, but in fit array, and under due command, and not with the tumultuary haste which their own alarm, and zeal for the King's safety, might have dictated.

In the meanwhile, without regarding for one instant the shouts, the cries, the tumult which began to thicken around him, Richard, with his dress in the last disorder, and his sheathed blade under his arm, pursued his way with the utmost speed, followed only by De Vaux and one or two household servants, to St. George's Mount.

He outsped even the alarm which his impetuosity only had excited, and passed the quarter of his own gallant troops of Normandy, Poitou, Gascony, and Anjou before the disturbance had reached them, although the noise accompanying the German revel had induced many of the soldiery to get on foot to listen. The handful of Scots were also quartered in the vicinity, nor had they been disturbed by the uproar. But the King's person and his haste were both remarked by the Knight of the Leopard, who, aware that danger must be afoot, and hastening to share in it, snatched his shield and sword and united himself to De Vaux, who with some difficulty kept pace with his impatient and fiery master. De Vaux answered a look of curiosity which the Scottish knight directed towards him with a shrug of his broad shoulders, and they continued, side by side, to pursue Richard's steps.

The King was soon at the foot of St. George's Mount, the sides as well as platform of which were now surrounded and crowded, partly by those belonging to the Duke of Austria's retinue, who were celebrating, with shouts of jubilee, the act which they considered as an assertion of national honour; partly by bystanders of different nations, whom dislike to the English, or mere curiosity, had assembled together to witness the end of these extraordinary proceedings. Through this disorderly troop Richard burst his way, like a goodly ship under full sail, which cleaves her forcible passage through the rolling billows, and heeds not that they unite after her passage and roar upon her stern.

The summit of the eminence was a small level space, on which were pitched the rival banners, surrounded still by the Archduke's friends and retinue. In the midst of the circle was Leopold himself, still contemplating with self-satisfaction the deed he had done, and still listening to the shouts of applause which his partizans bestowed with no sparing breath. While he was in this state of self-gratulation, Richard burst into the circle, attended, indeed, only by two men, but in his own headlong energies an irresistible host.

'Who has dared,' he said, laying his hands upon the Austrian standard, and speaking in a voice like the sound which precedes an earthquake — 'who has dared to place this paltry rag beside the banner of England?'

The Archduke wanted not personal courage, and it was impossible he could hear this question without reply. Yet, so much was he troubled and surprised by the unexpected arrival of Richard, and affected by the general awe inspired by his ardent and unyielding character, that the demand was twice repeated, in a tone which seemed to challenge heaven and earth, ere the Archduke replied, with such firmness as he could command, 'It was I, Leopold of Austria.'

'Then shall Leopold of Austria,' replied Richard, 'presently see the rate at which his banner and his pretensions are held by Richard of England.'

So saying, he pulled up the standard-spear, splintered it to pieces, threw the banner itself on the ground, and placed his foot upon it.

'Thus,' said he, 'I trample on the banner of Austria! Is there a knight among your Teutonic chivalry dare impeach my deed?'

There was a momentary silence; but there are no braver men than the Germans.

'I!' and 'I!' and 'I!' was heard from several knights of the Duke's followers; and he himself added his voice to those which accepted the King of England's defiance.

'Why do we dally thus?' said the Earl Wallenrode, a gigantic warrior from the frontiers of Hungary. 'Brethren and noble gentlemen, this man's foot is on the honour of your country. Let us rescue it from violation, and down with the pride of England!'

So saying, he drew his sword and struck at the King a blow which might have proved fatal, had not the Scot intercepted and caught it upon his shield.

‘I have sworn,’ said King Richard, and his voice was heard above all the tumult, which now waxed wild and loud, ‘never to strike one whose shoulder bears the cross ; therefore live, Wallenrode, but live to remember Richard of England.’

As he spoke, he grasped the tall Hungarian round the waist, and, unmatched in wrestling as in other military exercises, hurled him backwards with such violence that the mass flew, as if discharged from a military engine, not only through the ring of spectators who witnessed the extraordinary scene, but over the edge of the mount itself, down the steep side of which Wallenrode rolled headlong, until, pitching at length upon his shoulder, he dislocated the bone, and lay like one dead. This almost supernatural display of strength did not encourage either the Duke or any of his followers to renew a personal contest so inauspiciously commenced. Those who stood farthest back did, indeed, clash their swords and cry out, ‘Cut the island mastiff to pieces !’ but those who were nearer veiled, perhaps, their personal fears under an affected regard for order, and cried, for the most part, ‘Peace — peace — the peace of the Cross — the peace of Holy Church and our Father the Pope !’

These various cries of the assailants, contradicting each other, showed their irresolution ; while Richard, his foot still on the archducal banner, glared round him, with an eye that seemed to seek an enemy, and from which the angry nobles shrunk appalled, as from the threatened grasp of a lion. De Vaux and the Knight of the Leopard kept their places beside him ; and though the swords which they held were still sheathed, it was plain that they were prompt to protect Richard’s person to the very last, and their size and remarkable strength plainly showed the defence would be a desperate one.

Salisbury and his attendants were also now drawing near, with bills and partizans brandished, and bows already bended.

At this moment, King Philip of France, attended by one or two of his nobles, came on the platform to inquire the cause of the disturbance, and made gestures of surprise at finding the King of England raised from his sick-bed, and confronting their common ally the Duke of Austria in such a menacing and insulting posture. Richard himself blushed at being discovered by Philip, whose sagacity he respected as much as he disliked his person, in an attitude neither becoming his character as a monarch nor as a Crusader ; and it was observed that he withdrew his foot, as if accidentally, from the dishonoured banner,

and exchanged his look of violent emotion for one of affected composure and indifference. Leopold also struggled to attain some degree of calmness, mortified as he was by having been seen by Philip in the act of passively submitting to the insults of the fiery King of England.

Possessed of many of those royal qualities for which he was termed by his subjects 'the august,' Philip might be termed the Ulysses, as Richard was indisputably the Achilles, of the Crusade. The King of France was sagacious, wise, deliberate in council, steady and calm in action, seeing clearly, and steadily pursuing, the measures most for the interest of his kingdom, dignified and royal in his deportment, brave in person, but a politician rather than a warrior. The Crusade would have been no choice of his own, but the spirit was contagious, and the expedition was enforced upon him by the church, and by the unanimous wish of his nobility. In any other situation, or in a milder age, his character might have stood higher than that of the adventurous Cœur-de-Lion; but in the Crusade, itself an undertaking wholly irrational, sound reason was the quality, of all others, least estimated, and the chivalric valour which both the age and the enterprise demanded was considered as debased if mingled with the least touch of discretion. So that the merit of Philip, compared with that of his haughty rival, showed like the clear but minute flame of a lamp, placed near the glare of a huge blazing torch, which, not possessing half the utility, makes ten times more impression on the eye. Philip felt his inferiority in public opinion, with the pain natural to a high-spirited prince; and it cannot be wondered at if he took such opportunities as offered for placing his own character in more advantageous contrast with that of his rival. The present seemed one of those occasions in which prudence and calmness might reasonably expect to triumph over obstinacy and impetuous violence.

'What means this unseemly broil betwixt the sworn brethren of the Cross — the royal Majesty of England and the princely Duke Leopold? How is it possible that those who are the chiefs and pillars of this holy expedition —'

'A truce with thy remonstrance, France,' said Richard, enraged inwardly at finding himself placed on a sort of equality with Leopold, yet not knowing how to resent it, 'this duke, or prince, or pillar, if you will, hath been insolent, and I have chastised him — that is all. Here is a coil, forsooth, because of spurning a hound!'



'Majesty of France,' said the Duke, 'I appeal to you and every sovereign prince against the foul indignity which I have sustained. This King of England hath pulled down my banner, torn, and trampled on it.'

'Because he had the audacity to plant it beside mine,' said Richard.

'My rank as thine equal entitled me,' replied the Duke, emboldened by the presence of Philip.

'Assert such equality for thy person,' said King Richard, 'and, by St. George, I will treat thy person as I did thy brodered kerchief there, fit but for the meanest use to which kerchief may be put.'

'Nay, but patience, brother of England,' said Philip, 'and I will presently show Austria that he is wrong in this matter. Do not think, noble Duke,' he continued, 'that, in permitting the standard of England to occupy the highest point in our camp, we, the independent sovereigns of the Crusade, acknowledge any inferiority to the royal Richard. It were inconsistent to think so; since even the oriflamme itself—the great banner of France, to which the royal Richard himself, in respect of his French possessions, is but a vassal—holds for the present an inferior place to the lions of England. But as sworn brethren of the Cross, military pilgrims, who, laying aside the pomp and pride of this world, are hewing with our swords the way to the Holy Sepulchre, I myself, and the other princes, have renounced to King Richard, from respect to his high renown and great feats of arms, that precedence which elsewhere, and upon other motives, would not have been yielded. I am satisfied that, when your royal grace of Austria shall have considered this, you will express sorrow for having placed your banner on this spot, and that the royal Majesty of England will then give satisfaction for the insult he has offered.'

The *spruchsprecher* and the jester had both retired to a safe distance when matters seemed coming to blows, but returned when words, their own commodity, seemed again about to become the order of the day.

The man of proverbs was so delighted with Philip's politic speech, that he clashed his baton at the conclusion, by way of emphasis, and forgot the presence in which he was so far as to say aloud, that he himself had never said a wiser thing in his life.

'It may be so,' whispered Jonas Schwanker, 'but we shall be whipt if you speak so loud.'

The Duke answered sullenly, that he would refer his quarrel

to the general council of the Crusade—a motion which Philip highly applauded, as qualified to take away a scandal most harmful to Christendom.

Richard, retaining the same careless attitude, listened to Philip until his oratory seemed exhausted, and then said aloud, ‘I am drowsy, this fever hangs about me still. Brother of France, thou art acquainted with my humour, and that I have at all times but few words to spare; know, therefore, at once, I will submit a matter touching the honour of England neither to prince, pope, nor council. Here stands my banner; whatsoever pennon shall be reared within three butts’ length of it—ay, were it the oriflamme, of which you were, I think, but now speaking—shall be treated as that dishonoured rag; nor will I yield other satisfaction than that which these poor limbs can render in the lists to any bold challenge—ay, were it against five champions instead of one.’

‘Now,’ said the jester, whispering his companion, ‘that is as complete a piece of folly as if I myself had said it; but yet, I think, there may be in this matter a greater fool than Richard yet.’

‘And who may that be?’ asked the man of wisdom.

‘Philip,’ said the jester, ‘or our own Royal Duke, should either accept the challenge. But oh, most sage *spruchsprecher*, what excellent kings would thou and I have made, since those on whose heads these crowns have fallen can play the proverb-monger and the fool as completely as ourselves!’

While these worthies plied their offices apart, Philip answered calmly to the almost injurious defiance of Richard, ‘I came not hither to awaken fresh quarrels, contrary to the oath we have sworn and the holy cause in which we have engaged. I part from my brother of England as brothers should part, and the only strife between the lions of England and the lilies of France shall be, which shall be carried deepest into the ranks of the infidels.’

It is a bargain, my royal brother,’ said Richard, stretching out his hand with all the frankness which belonged to his rash but generous disposition; ‘and soon may we have the opportunity to try this gallant and fraternal wager.’

‘Let this noble Duke also partake in the friendship of this happy moment,’ said Philip; and the Duke approached, half-sullenly, half-willing to enter into some accommodation.

‘I think not of fools, nor of their folly,’ said Richard, carelessly; and the Archduke, turning his back on him, withdrew from the ground.

Richard looked after him as he retired. 'There is a sort of glow-worm courage,' he said, 'that shows only by night. I must not leave this banner unguarded in darkness; by daylight the look of the lions will alone defend it. Here, Thomas of Gilsland, I give thee the charge of the standard — watch over the honour of England.'

'Her safety is yet more dear to me,' said De Vaux, 'and the life of Richard is the safety of England. I must have your Highness back to your tent, and that without further tarriance.'

'Thou art a rough and peremptory nurse, De Vaux,' said the King, smiling; and then added, addressing Sir Kenneth, 'Valiant Scot, I owe thee a boon, and I will pay it richly. There stands the banner of England; watch it as a novice does his armour on the night before he is dubbed. Stir not from it three spears' length, and defend it with thy body against injury or insult. Sound thy bugle, if thou art assailed by more than three at once. Dost thou undertake the charge?'

'Willingly,' said Kenneth; 'and will discharge it upon penalty of my head. I will but arm me and return hither instantly.'

The Kings of France and England then took formal leave of each other, hiding, under an appearance of courtesy, the grounds of complaint which either had against the other — Richard against Philip, for what he deemed an officious interference betwixt him and Austria, and Philip against Cœur-de-Lion, for the disrespectful manner in which his mediation had been received. Those whom this disturbance had assembled now drew off in different directions, leading the contested mount in the same solitude which had subsisted till interrupted by the Austrian bravado. Men judged of the events of the day according to their partialities; and while the English charged the Austrian with having afforded the first ground of quarrel, those of other nations concurred in casting the greater blame upon the insular haughtiness and assuming character of Richard.

'Thou seest,' said the Marquis of Montserrat to the Grand Master of the Templars, 'that subtle courses are more effective than violence. I have unloosed the bonds which held together this bunch of sceptres and lances; thou wilt see them shortly fall asunder.'

'I would have called thy plan a good one,' said the Templar, 'had there been but one man of courage amoug yonder cold-blooded Austrians, to sever the bonds of which you speak with his sword. A knot that is unloosed may again be fastened, but not so the cord which has been cut to pieces.'

## CHAPTER XII

'T is woman that seduces all mankind.

GAY.

IN the days of chivalry, a dangerous post, or a perilous adventure, was a reward frequently assigned to military bravery as a compensation for its former trials; just as, in ascending a precipice, the surmounting one crag only lifts the climber to points yet more dangerous.

It was midnight, and the moon rode clear and high in heaven, when Kenneth of Scotland stood upon his watch on St. George's Mount, beside the banner of England—a solitary sentinel, to protect the emblem of that nation against the insults which might be meditated among the thousands whom Richard's pride had made his enemies. High thoughts rolled, one after another, upon the mind of the warrior. It seemed to him as if he had gained some favour in the eyes of the chivalrous monarch, who till now had not seemed to distinguish him among the crowds of brave men whom his renown had assembled under his banner, and Sir Kenneth little recked that the display of royal regard consisted in placing him upon a post so perilous. The devotion of his ambitious and high-placed affection inflamed his military enthusiasm. Hopeless as that attachment was, in almost any conceivable circumstances, those which had lately occurred had, in some degree, diminished the distance between Edith and himself. He upon whom Richard had conferred the distinction of guarding his banner was no longer an adventurer of slight note, but placed within the regard of a princess, although he was as far as ever from her level. An unknown and obscure fate could not now be his. If he was surprised and slain on the post which had been assigned him, his death—and he resolved it should be glorious—must deserve the praises, as well as call down the vengeance, of Cœur-de-Lion, and be followed by the regrets, and even the tears, of the high-born beauties of the English court. He

had now no longer reason to fear that he should die as a fool dieth.

Sir Kenneth had full leisure to enjoy these and similar high-souled thoughts, fostered by that wild spirit of chivalry which, amid its most extravagant and fantastic flights, was still pure from all selfish alloy — generous, devoted, and perhaps only thus far censurable, that it proposed objects and courses of action inconsistent with the frailties and imperfections of man. All nature around him slept in calm moonshine or in deep shadow. The long rows of tents and pavilions, glimmering or darkening as they lay in the moonlight or in the shade, were still and silent as the streets of a deserted city. Beside the banner-staff lay the large staghound already mentioned, the sole companion of Kenneth's watch, on whose vigilance he trusted for early warning of the approach of any hostile foot-step. The noble animal seemed to understand the purpose of their watch, for he looked from time to time at the rich folds of the heavy pennon, and, when the cry of the sentinels came from the distant lines and defences of the camp, he answered them with one deep and reiterated bark, as if to affirm that he too was vigilant in his duty. From time to time, also, he lowered his lofty head and wagged his tail, as his master passed and repassed him in the short turns which he took upon his post; or, when the knight stood silent and abstracted, leaning on his lance, and looking up towards heaven, his faithful attendant ventured sometimes, in the phrase of romance, 'to disturb his thoughts,' and awaken him from his reverie, by thrusting his large rough snout into the knight's gauntleted hand, to solicit a transitory caress.

Thus passed two hours of the knight's watch without anything remarkable occurring. At length, and upon a sudden, the gallant staghound bayed furiously, and seemed about to dash forward where the shadow lay the darkest, yet waited, as if in the slips, till he should know the pleasure of his master.

'Who goes there?' said Sir Kenneth, aware that there was something creeping forward on the shadowy side of the mount.

'In the name of Merlin and Maugis,' answered a hoarse, disagreeable voice, 'tie up your four-footed demon there, or I come not at you.'

'And who art thou that would approach my post?' said Sir Kenneth, bending his eyes as keenly as he could on some object, which he could just observe at the bottom of the ascent, without



being able to distinguish its form. 'Beware — I am here for death and life.'

'Take up thy long-fanged Sathanas,' said the voice, 'or I will conjure him with a bolt from my arblast.'

At the same time was heard the sound of a spring or check, as when a cross-bow is bent.

'Unbend thy arblast, and come into the moonlight,' said the Scot, 'or, by St. Andrew, I will pin thee to the earth, be what or whom thou wilt.'

As he spoke, he poised his long lance by the middle, and, fixing his eye upon the object which seemed to move, he brandished the weapon, as if meditating to cast it from his hand — a use of the weapon sometimes, though rarely, resorted to, when a missile was necessary. But Sir Kenneth was ashamed of his purpose, and grounded his weapon, when there stepped from the shadow into the moonlight, like an actor entering upon the stage, a stunted, decrepit creature, whom, by his fantastic dress and deformity, he recognised, even at some distance, for the male of the two dwarfs whom he had seen in the chapel at Engaddi. Recollecting, at the same moment, the other, and far different, visions of that extraordinary night, he gave his dog a signal, which he instantly understood, and, returning to the standard, laid himself down beside it with a stifled growl.

The little distorted miniature of humanity, assured of his safety from an enemy so formidable, came panting up the ascent, which the shortness of his legs rendered laborious, and, when he arrived on the platform at the top, shifted to his left hand the little cross-bow, which was just such a toy as children at that period were permitted to shoot small birds with, and, assuming an attitude of great dignity, gracefully extended his right hand to Sir Kenneth, in an attitude as if he expected he would salute it. But such a result not following, he demanded, in a sharp and angry tone of voice, 'Soldier, wherefore renderest thou not to Nectabanus the homage due to his dignity? Or, is it possible that thou canst have forgotten him?'

'Great Nectabanus,' answered the knight, willing to soothe the creature's humour, 'that were difficult for any one who has ever looked upon thee. Pardon me, however, that, being a soldier upon my post, with my lance in my hand, I may not give to one of thy puissance the advantage of coming within my guard, or of mastering my weapon. Suffice it, that I reverence thy dignity, and submit myself to thee as humbly as a man-at-arms in my place may.'

'It shall suffice,' said Nectabanus, 'so that you presently attend me to the presence of those who have sent me hither to summon you.'

'Great sir,' replied the knight, 'neither in this can I gratify thee, for my orders are to abide by this banner till daybreak; so I pray you to hold me excused in that matter also.'

So saying, he resumed his walk upon the platform; but the dwarf did not suffer him so easily to escape from his importunity.

'Look you,' he said, placing himself before Sir Kenneth, so as to interrupt his way, 'either obey me, sir knight, as in duty bound, or I will lay the command upon thee, in the name of one whose beauty could call down the genii from their sphere, and whose grandeur could command the immortal race when they had descended.'

A wild and improbable conjecture arose in the knight's mind, but he repelled it. It was impossible, he thought, that the lady of his love should have sent him such a message by such a messenger; yet his voice trembled as he said, 'Go to, Nectabanus. Tell me at once, and as a true man, whether this sublime lady of whom thou speakest be other than the houri with whose assistance I beheld thee sweeping the chapel at Engaddi?'

'How! presumptuous knight,' replied the dwarf, 'think'st thou the mistress of our own royal affections, the sharer of our greatness, and the partner of our comeliness, would demean herself by laying charge on such a vassal as thou? No, highly as thou art honoured, thou hast not yet deserved the notice of Queen Guenevra, the lovely bride of Arthur, from whose high seat even princes seem but pigmies. But look thou here, and as thou knowest or disownest this token, so obey or refuse her commands who hath deigned to impose them on thee.'

So saying, he placed in the knight's hands a ruby ring, which, even in the moonlight, he had no difficulty to recognise as that which usually graced the finger of the high-born lady to whose service he had devoted himself. Could he have doubted the truth of the token, he would have been convinced by the small knot of carnation-coloured ribbon which was fastened to the ring. This was his lady's favourite colour, and more than once had he himself, assuming it for that of his own liveries, caused the carnation to triumph over all other hues in the lists and in the battle.

Sir Kenneth was struck nearly mute by seeing such a token in such hands.

‘In the name of all that is sacred, from whom didst thou receive this witness?’ said the knight. ‘Bring, if thou canst, thy wavering understanding to a right settlement for a minute or two, and tell me the person by whom thou art sent, and the real purpose of thy message; and take heed what thou say’st, for this is no subject for buffoonery.’

‘Fond and foolish knight,’ said the dwarf, ‘wouldst thou know more of this matter than that thou art honoured with commands from a princess, delivered to thee by a king? We list not to parley with thee farther than to command thee, in the name and by the power of that ring, to follow us to her who is the owner of the ring. Every minute that thou tarriest is a crime against thy allegiance.’

‘Good Nectabanus, bethink thyself,’ said the knight. ‘Can my lady know where and upon what duty I am this night engaged? Is she aware that my life — pshaw, why should I speak of life? — but that my honour depends on my guarding this banner till daybreak, and can it be her wish that I should leave it even to pay homage to her? It is impossible; the princess is pleased to be merry with her servant, in sending him such a message, and I must think so the rather that she hath chosen such a messenger.’

‘Oh, keep your belief,’ said Nectabanus, turning round as if to leave the platform; ‘it is little to me whether you be traitor or true man to this royal lady; so fare thee well.’

‘Stay — stay — I entreat you stay,’ said Sir Kenneth; ‘answer me but one question — Is the lady who sent thee near to this place?’

‘What signifies it?’ said the dwarf. ‘Ought fidelity to reckon furlongs, or miles, or leagues, like the poor courier, who is paid for his labour by the distance which he traverses? Nevertheless, thou soul of suspicion, I tell thee, the fair owner of the ring, now sent to so unworthy a vassal, in whom there is neither truth nor courage, is not more distant from this place than this arblast can send a bolt.’

The knight gazed again on the ring, as if to ascertain that there was no possible falsehood in the token. ‘Tell me,’ he said to the dwarf, ‘is my presence required for any length of time?’

‘Time!’ answered Nectabanus, in his flighty manner; ‘what call you time? I see it not — I feel it not; it is but a shadowy name — a succession of breathings measured forth by night by the clank of a bell, by day by a shadow crossing along a dial-

stone. Know'st thou not a true knight's time should only be reckoned by the deeds that he performs in behalf of God and his lady ?'

'The words of truth, though in the mouth of folly,' said the knight. 'And doth my lady really summon me to some deed of action in her name and for her sake ? and may it not be postponed for even the few hours till daybreak ?'

'She requires thy presence instantly,' said the dwarf, 'and without the loss of so much time as would be told by ten grains of the sand-glass. Harken, thou cold-blooded and suspicious knight, these are her very words — "Tell him that the hand which dropped roses can bestow laurels."'

This allusion to their meeting in the chapel of Engaddi sent a thousand recollections through Sir Kenneth's brain, and convinced him that the message delivered by the dwarf was genuine. The rosebuds, withered as they were, were still treasured under his cuirass, and nearest to his heart. He paused, and could not resolve to forego an opportunity — the only one which might ever offer — to gain grace in her eyes whom he had installed as sovereign of his affections. The dwarf, in the meantime, augmented his confusion by insisting either that he must return the ring or instantly attend him.

'Hold — hold — yet a moment hold,' said the knight, and proceeded to mutter to himself — 'Am I either the subject or slave of King Richard, more than as a free knight sworn to the service of the Crusade ? And whom have I come hither to honour with lance and sword ? Our holy cause and my transcendent lady !'

'The ring — the ring !' exclaimed the dwarf, impatiently — 'false and slothful knight, return the ring, which thou art unworthy to touch or to look upon.'

'A moment — a moment, good Nectabanus,' said Sir Kenneth ; 'disturb not my thoughts. What if the Saracens were just now to attack our lines ? Should I stay here like a sworn vassal of England, watching that her king's pride suffered no humiliation, or should I speed to the breach, and fight for the Cross ? To the breach, assuredly ; and next to the cause of God, come the commands of my liege lady. And yet, Cœur-de-Lion's behest — my own promise ! Nectabanus, I conjure thee once more to say, are you to conduct me far from hence ?'

'But to yonder pavilion ; and, since you must needs know,' replied Nectabanus, 'the moon is glimmering on the gilded ball which crowns its roof, and which is worth a king's ransom.'

'I can return in an instant,' said the knight, shutting his eyes desperately to all farther consequences. 'I can hear from thence the bay of my dog, if any one approaches the standard ; I will throw myself at my lady's feet, and pray her leave to return to conclude my watch. Here, Roswal (calling his hound, and throwing down his mantle by the side of the standard-spear), watch thou here, and let no one approach.'

The majestic dog looked in his master's face, as if to be sure that he understood his charge, then sat down beside the mantle, with ears erect and head raised, like a sentinel, understanding perfectly the purpose for which he was stationed there.

'Come now, good Nectabanus,' said the knight, 'let us hasten to obey the commands thou hast brought.'

'Haste he that will,' said the dwarf, sullenly ; 'thou hast not been in haste to obey my summons, nor can I walk fast enough to follow your long strides : you do not walk like a man, but bound like an ostrich in the desert.'

There were but two ways of conquering the obstinacy of Nectabanus, who, as he spoke, diminished his walk into a snail pace. For bribes Sir Kenneth had no means, for soothing no time ; so in his impatience he snatched the dwarf up from the ground, and bearing him along, notwithstanding his entreaties and his fear, reached nearly to the pavilion pointed out as that of the Queen. In approaching it, however, the Scot observed there was a small guard of soldiers sitting on the ground, who had been concealed from him by the intervening tents. Wondering that the clash of his own armour had not yet attracted their attention, and supposing that his motions might, on the present occasion, require to be conducted with secrecy, he placed the little panting guide upon the ground to recover his breath and point out what was next to be done. Nectabanus was both frightened and angry ; but he had felt himself as completely in the power of the robust knight as an owl in the claws of an eagle, and therefore cared not to provoke him to any farther display of his strength.

He made no complaints, therefore, of the usage he had received, but turning amongst the labyrinth of tents, he led the knight in silence to the opposite side of the pavilion, which thus screened them from the observation of the warders, who seemed either too negligent or too sleepy to discharge their duty with much accuracy. Arrived there, the dwarf raised the under part of the canvas from the ground, and made signs to Sir Kenneth that he should introduce himself to the inside of the tent, by



creeping under it. The knight hesitated : there seemed an indecorum in thus privately introducing himself into a pavilion pitched, doubtless, for the accommodation of noble ladies ; but he recalled to remembrance the assured tokens which the dwarf had exhibited, and concluded that it was not for him to dispute his lady's pleasure.

He stooped accordingly, crept beneath the canvas inclosure of the tent, and heard the dwarf whisper from without —  
'Remain there until I call thee.'

## CHAPTER XIII

You talk of gaiety and innocence !  
The moment when the fatal fruit was eaten,  
They parted ne'er to meet again ; and malice  
Has ever since been playmate to light gaiety,  
From the first moment when the smiling infant  
Destroys the flower or butterfly he toys with  
To the last chuckle of the dying miser,  
Who on his deathbed laughs his last to hear  
His wealthy neighbour has become a bankrupt.

*Old Play.*

SIR KENNETH was left for some minutes alone and in darkness. Here was another interruption, which must prolong his absence from his post, and he began almost to repent the facility with which he had been induced to quit it. But to return without seeing the Lady Edith was now not to be thought of. He had committed a breach of military discipline, and was determined at least to prove the reality of the seductive expectations which had tempted him to do so. Meanwhile, his situation was unpleasant. There was no light to show him into what sort of apartment he had been led ; the Lady Edith was in immediate attendance on the Queen of England, and the discovery of his having introduced himself thus furtively into the royal pavilion might, were it discovered, lead to much and dangerous suspicion. While he gave way to these unpleasant reflections, and began almost to wish that he could achieve his retreat unobserved, he heard a noise of female voices, laughing, whispering, and speaking in an adjoining apartment, from which, as the sounds gave him reason to judge, he could only be separated by a canvas partition. Lamps were burning, as he might perceive by the shadowy light which extended itself even to his side of the veil which divided the tent, and he could see shades of several figures sitting and moving in the adjoining apartment. It cannot be termed discourtesy in Sir Kenneth that, situated as he was, he overheard a conversation in which he found himself deeply interested.

'Call her — call her, for Our Lady's sake,' said the voice of one of these laughing invisibles. 'Nectabanus, thou shalt be made ambassador to Prester John's court, to show them how wisely thou canst discharge thee of a mission.'

The shrill tone of the dwarf was heard, yet so much subdued, that Sir Kenneth could not understand what he said, except that he spoke something of the means of merriment given to the guard.

'But how shall we rid us of the spirit which Nectabanus hath raised, my maidens?'

'Hear me, royal madam,' said another voice; 'if the sage and princely Nectabanus be not over-jealous of his most transcendent bride and empress, let us send her to get us rid of this insolent knight-errant, who can be so easily persuaded that high-born dames may need the use of his insolent and overweening valour.'

'It were but justice, methinks,' replied another, 'that the Princess Guenevra should dismiss, by her courtesy, him whom her husband's wisdom has been able to entice hither.'

Struck to the heart with shame and resentment at what he had heard, Sir Kenneth was about to attempt his escape from the tent at all hazards, when what followed arrested his purpose.

'Nay, truly,' said the first speaker, 'our cousin Edith must first learn how this vaunted wight hath conducted himself, and we must reserve the power of giving her ocular proof that he hath failed in his duty. It may be a lesson will do good upon her; for, credit me, Calista, I have sometimes thought she has let this Northern adventurer sit nearer her heart than prudence would sanction.'

One of the other voices was then heard to mutter something of the Lady Edith's prudence and wisdom.

'Prudence, wench!' was the reply. 'It is mere pride, and the desire to be thought more rigid than any of us. Nay, I will not quit my advantage. You know well that, when she has us at fault, no one can, in a civil way, lay your error before you more precisely than can my Lady Edith. But here she comes.'

A figure, as if entering the apartment, cast upon the partition a shade, which glided along slowly until it mixed with those which already clouded it. Despite of the bitter disappointment which he had experienced, despite the insult and injury with which it seemed he had been visited by the malice, or, at best, by the idle humour, of Queen Berengaria (for he

already concluded that she who spoke loudest, and in a commanding tone, was the wife of Richard), the knight felt something so soothing to his feelings in learning that Edith had been no partner to the fraud practised on him, and so interesting to his curiosity in the scene which was about to take place, that, instead of prosecuting his more prudent purpose of an instant retreat, he looked anxiously, on the contrary, for some rent or crevice by means of which he might be made eye as well as ear-witness to what was to go forward.

'Surely,' said he to himself, 'the Queen, who hath been pleased for an idle frolic to endanger my reputation, and perhaps my life, cannot complain if I avail myself of the chance which fortune seems willing to afford me, to obtain knowledge of her further intentions.'

It seemed, in the meanwhile, as if Edith were waiting for the commands of the Queen, and as if the other were reluctant to speak, for fear of being unable to command her laughter and that of her companions; for Sir Kenneth could only distinguish a sound as of suppressed tittering and merriment.

'Your Majesty,' said Edith, at last, 'seems in a merry mood, though, methinks, the hour of night prompts a sleepy one. I was well disposed bedward, when I had your Majesty's commands to attend you.'

'I will not long delay you, cousin, from your repose,' said the Queen; 'though I fear you will sleep less soundly when I tell you your wager is lost.'

'Nay, royal madam,' said Edith, 'this, surely, is dwelling on a jest which has rather been worn out. I laid no wager, however it was your Majesty's pleasure to suppose, or to insist, that I did so.'

'Nay, now, despite our pilgrimage, Satan is strong with you, my gentle cousin, and prompts thee to leasing. Can you deny that you gaged your ruby ring against my golden bracelet that yonder Knight of the Libbard, or how call you him, could not be seduced from his post?'

'Your Majesty is too great for me to gainsay you,' replied Edith; 'but these ladies can, if they will, bear me witness that it was your Highness who proposed such a wager, and took the ring from my finger, even while I was declaring that I did not think it maidenly to gage anything on such a subject.'

'Nay, but, my Lady Edith,' said another voice, 'you must needs grant, under your favour, that you expressed yourself very confident of the valour of that same Knight of the Leopard.'

'And if I did, minion,' said Edith, angrily, 'is that a good reason why thou shouldst put in thy word to flatter her Majesty's humour? I spoke of that knight but as all men speak who have seen him in the field, and had no more interest in defending than thou in detracting from him. In a camp, what can women speak of save soldiers and deeds of arms?'

'The noble Lady Edith,' said a third voice, 'hath never forgiven Calista and me, since we told your Majesty that she dropped two rosebuds in the chapel.'

'If your Majesty,' said Edith, in a tone which Sir Kenneth could judge to be that of respectful remonstrance, 'have no other commands for me than to hear the gibes of your waiting-women, I must crave your permission to withdraw.'

'Silence, Florise,' said the Queen, 'and let not our indulgence lead you to forget the difference betwixt yourself and the kinswoman of England. But you, my dear cousin,' she continued, resuming her tone of raillery, 'how can you, who are so good-natured, begrudge us poor wretches a few minutes' laughing, when we have had so many days devoted to weeping and gnashing of teeth?'

'Great be your mirth, royal lady,' said Edith; 'yet would I be content not to smile for the rest of my life rather than ——'

She stopped, apparently out of respect; but Sir Kenneth could hear that she was in much agitation.

'Forgive me,' said Berengaria, a thoughtless but good-humoured princess of the house of Navarre; 'but what is the great offence after all? A young knight has been wiled hither; has stolen — or has *been* stolen — from his post, which no one will disturb in his absence, for the sake of a fair lady; for, to do your champion justice, sweet one, the wisdom of Nectabanus could conjure him hither in no name but yours.'

'Gracious Heaven! your Majesty does not say so?' said Edith, in a voice of alarm quite different from the agitation she had previously evinced — 'you cannot say so, consistently with respect for your own honour and for mine, your husband's kinswoman! Say you were jesting with me, my royal mistress, and forgive me that I could, even for a moment, think it possible you could be in earnest!'

'The Lady Edith,' said the Queen, in a displeased tone of voice, 'regrets the ring we have won of her. We will restore the pledge to you, gentle cousin, only you must not grudge us in turn a little triumph over the wisdom which has been so often spread over us, as a banner over a host.'



'A triumph!' exclaimed Edith, indignantly — 'a triumph! The triumph will be with the infidel, when he hears that the Queen of England can make the reputation of her husband's kinswoman the subject of a light frolic.'

'You are angry, fair cousin, at losing your favourite ring,' said the Queen. 'Come, since you grudge to pay your wager, we will renounce our right; it was your name and that pledge brought him hither, and we care not for the bait after the fish is caught.'

'Madam,' replied Edith, impatiently, 'you know well that your Grace could not wish for anything of mine but it becomes instantly yours. But I would give a bushel of rubies ere ring or name of mine had been used to bring a brave man into a fault, and perhaps to disgrace and punishment.'

'O, it is for the safety of our true knight that we fear?' said the Queen. 'You rate our power too low, fair cousin, when you speak of a life being lost for a frolic of ours. O, Lady Edith, others have influence on the iron breasts of warriors as well as you: the heart even of a lion is made of flesh, not of stone; and, believe me, I have interest enough with Richard to save this knight, in whose fate Lady Edith is so deeply concerned, from the penalty of disobeying his royal commands.'

'For the love of the blessed cross, most royal lady,' said Edith — and Sir Kenneth, with feelings which it were hard to unravel, heard her prostrate herself at the Queen's feet — 'for the love of our blessed Lady, and of every holy saint in the calendar, beware what you do! You know not King Richard — you have been but shortly wedded to him: your breath might as well combat the west wind when it is wildest as your words persuade my royal kinsman to pardon a military offence. Oh! for God's sake, dismiss this gentleman, if indeed you have lured him hither! I could almost be content to rest with the shame of having invited him, did I know that he was returned again where his duty calls him.'

'Arise, cousin — arise,' said Queen Berengaria, 'and be assured all will be better than you think. Rise, dear Edith; I am sorry I have played my foolery with a knight in whom you take such deep interest. Nay, wring not thy hands; I will believe thou carest not for him — believe anything rather than see thee look so wretchedly miserable. I tell thee I will take the blame on myself with King Richard in behalf of thy fair Northern friend — thine acquaintance, I would say, since thou own'st him not as a friend. Nay, look not so reproachfully.

We will send Nectabanus to dismiss this Knight of the Standard to his post; and we ourselves will grace him on some future day, to make amends for his wildgoose chase. He is, I warrant, but lying perdu in some neighbouring tent.'

'By my crown of lilies and my sceptre of a specially good water-reed,' said Nectabanus, 'your Majesty is mistaken: he is nearer at hand than you wot—he lieth ensconced there behind that canvas partition.'

'And within hearing of each word we have said!' exclaimed the Queen, in her turn violently surprised and agitated. 'Out, monster of folly and malignity!'

As she uttered these words, Nectabanus fled from the pavilion with a yell of such a nature as leaves it still doubtful whether Berengaria had confined her rebuke to words, or added some more emphatic expression of her displeasure.

'What can now be done?' said the Queen to Edith, in a whisper of undisguised uneasiness.

'That which must,' said Edith, firmly. 'We must see this gentleman, and place ourselves in his mercy.'

So saying, she began hastily to undo a curtain which at one place covered an entrance or communication.

'For Heaven's sake, forbear; consider,' said the Queen, 'my apartment—our dress—the hour—my honour!'

But ere she could detail her remonstrances, the curtain fell, and there was no division any longer betwixt the armed knight and the party of ladies. The warmth of an Eastern night occasioned the undress of Queen Berengaria and her household to be rather more simple and unstudied than their station, and the presence of a male spectator of rank, required. This the Queen remembered, and with a loud shriek fled from the apartment where Sir Kenneth was disclosed to view in a copartment of the ample pavilion, now no longer separated from that in which they stood. The grief and agitation of the Lady Edith, as well as the deep interest she felt in a hasty explanation with the Scottish knight, perhaps occasioned her forgetting that her locks were more dishevelled, and her person less heedfully covered, than was the wont of high-born damsels, in an age which was not, after all, the most prudish or scrupulous period of the ancient time. A thin loose garment of pink-coloured silk made the principal part of her vestments, with Oriental slippers, into which she had hastily thrust her bare feet, and a scarf hurriedly and loosely thrown about her shoulders. Her head had no other covering than the veil of rich and dishevelled

locks falling round it on every side, that half hid a countenance which a mingled sense of modesty, and of resentment, and other deep and agitating feelings, had covered with crimson.

But although Edith felt her situation with all that delicacy which is her sex's greatest charm, it did not seem that for a moment she placed her own bashfulness in comparison with the duty which, as she thought, she owed to him who had been led into error and danger on her account. She drew, indeed, her scarf more closely over her neck and bosom, and she hastily laid from her hand a lamp, which shed too much lustre over her figure; but, while Sir Kenneth stood motionless on the same spot in which he was first discovered, she rather stepped towards than retired from him, as she exclaimed, 'Hasten to your post, valiant knight; you are deceived in being trained hither. Ask no questions.'

'I need ask none,' said the knight, sinking upon one knee, with the reverential devotion of a saint at the altar, and bending his eyes on the ground, lest his looks should increase the lady's embarrassment.

'Have you heard all?' said Edith, impatiently. 'Gracious saints! then wherefore wait you here, when each minute that passes is loaded with dishonour?'

'I have heard that I am dishonoured, lady, and I have heard it from you,' answered Kenneth. 'What reck I how soon punishment follows? I have but one petition to you, and then I seek, among the sabres of the infidels, whether dishonour may not be washed out with blood.'

'Do not so, neither,' said the lady. 'Be wise: dally not here—all may yet be well, if you will but use despatch.'

'I wait but for your forgiveness,' said the knight, still kneeling, 'for my presumption in believing that my poor services could have been required or valued by you.'

'I do forgive you. O, I have nothing to forgive! I have been the means of injuring you. But O, begone! I will forgive—I will value you—that is, as I value every brave Crusader—if you will but begone!'

'Receive, first, this precious yet fatal pledge,' said the knight, tendering the ring to Edith, who now showed gestures of impatience.

'Oh no—no,' she said, declining to receive it. 'Keep it—keep it as a mark of my regard—my regret, I would say. O begone, if not for your own sake, for mine!'

Almost recompensed for the loss even of honour, which her voice had denounced to him, by the interest which she seemed to testify in his safety, Sir Kenneth rose from his knee, and, casting a momentary glance on Edith, bowed low and seemed about to withdraw. At the same instant, that maidenly bashfulness, which the energy of Edith's feelings had till then triumphed over, became conqueror in its turn, and she hastened from the apartment, extinguishing her lamp as she went, and leaving, in Sir Kenneth's thoughts, both mental and natural gloom behind her.

She must be obeyed was the first distinct idea which waked him from his reverie, and he hastened to the place by which he had entered the pavilion. To pass under the canvas in the manner he had entered required time and attention, and he made a readier aperture by slitting the canvas wall with his poniard. When in the free air, he felt rather stupified and overpowered by a conflict of sensations than able to ascertain what was the real import of the whole. He was obliged to spur himself to action, by recollecting that the commands of the Lady Edith had required haste. Even then, engaged as he was amongst tent-ropes and tents, he was compelled to move with caution until he should regain the path or avenue aside from which the dwarf had led him, in order to escape the observation of the guards before the Queen's pavilion; and he was obliged also to move slowly, and with precaution, to avoid giving an alarm, either by falling or by the clashing of his armour. A thin cloud had obscured the moon, too, at the very instant of his leaving the tent, and Sir Kenneth had to struggle with this inconvenience at a moment when the dizziness of his head and the fulness of his heart scarce left him powers of intelligence sufficient to direct his motions.

But at once sounds came upon his ear which instantly recalled him to the full energy of his faculties. These proceeded from the Mount of St. George. He heard first a single fierce, angry, and savage bark, which was immediately followed by a yell of agony. No deer ever bounded with a wilder start at the voice of Roswal than did Sir Kenneth at what he feared was the death-cry of that noble hound, from whom no ordinary injury could have extracted even the slightest acknowledgment of pain. He surmounted the space which divided him from the avenue, and, having attained it, began to run towards the mount, although loaded with his mail, faster than most men could have accompanied him even if unarmed.

relaxed not his pace for the steep sides of the artificial mound, and in a few minutes stood on the platform upon its summit.

The moon broke forth at this moment, and showed him that the standard of England was vanished, that the spear on which it had floated lay broken on the ground, and beside it was his faithful hound, apparently in the agonies of death.



## CHAPTER XIV

All my long arrear of honour lost,  
Heap'd up in youth, and hoarded up for age !  
Hath honour's fountain then suck'd up the stream ?  
He hath ; and hooting boys may barefoot pass,  
And gather pebbles from the naked ford.

*Don Sebastian.*

AFTER a torrent of afflicting sensations, by which he was at first almost stunned and confounded, Sir Kenneth's first thought was to look for the authors of this violation of the English banner ; but in no direction could he see traces of them. His next, which to some persons, but scarce to any who have made intimate acquaintances among the canine race, may appear strange, was to examine the condition of his faithful Roswal, mortally wounded, as it seemed, in discharging the duty which his master had been seduced to abandon. He caressed the dying animal, who, faithful to the last, seemed to forget his own pain in the satisfaction he received from his master's presence, and continued wagging his tail and licking his hand, even while by low moanings he expressed that his agony was increased by the attempts which Sir Kenneth made to withdraw from the wound the fragment of the lance, or javelin, with which it had been inflicted ; then redoubled his feeble endearments, as if fearing he had offended his master by showing a sense of the pain to which his interference had subjected him. There was something in the display of the dying creature's attachment which mixed as a bitter ingredient with the sense of disgrace and desolation by which Sir Kenneth was oppressed. His only friend seemed removed from him, just when he had incurred the contempt and hatred of all besides. The knight's strength of mind gave way to a burst of agonized distress, and he groaned and wept aloud.

While he thus indulged his grief, a clear and solemn voice, close beside him, pronounced these words in the sonorous tone

of the readers of the mosque, and in the *lingua franca*, mutually understood by Christians and Saracens :

‘Adversity is like the period of the former and of the latter rain — cold, comfortless, unfriendly to man and to animal ; yet from that season have their birth the flower and the fruit — the date, the rose, and the pomegranate.’

Sir Kenneth of the Leopard turned towards the speaker, and beheld the Arabian physician, who, approaching unheard, had seated himself a little behind him crossed-legged, and uttered with gravity, yet not without a tone of sympathy, the moral sentences of consolation with which the Koran and its commentators supplied him ; for, in the East, wisdom is held to consist less in a display of the sage’s own inventive talents than in his ready memory, and happy application of, and reference to, ‘that which is written.’

Ashamed at being surprised in a womanlike expression of sorrow, Sir Kenneth dashed his tears indignantly aside, and again busied himself with his dying favourite.

‘The poet hath said,’ continued the Arab, without noticing the knight’s averted looks and sullen deportment, ‘the ox for the field and the camel for the desert. Were not the hand of the leech fitter than that of the soldier to cure wounds, though less able to inflict them?’

‘This patient, Hakim, is beyond thy help,’ said Sir Kenneth ; ‘and, besides, he is, by thy law, an unclean animal.’

‘Where Allah hath deigned to bestow life, and a sense of pain and pleasure,’ said the physician, ‘it were sinful pride should the sage, whom He has enlightened, refuse to prolong existence or assuage agony. To the sage, the cure of a miserable groom, of a poor dog, and of a conquering monarch are events of little distinction. Let me examine this wounded animal.’

Sir Kenneth acceded in silence, and the physician inspected and handled Roswal’s wound with as much care and attention as if he had been a human being. He then took forth a case of instruments, and, by the judicious and skilful application of pincers, withdrew from the wounded shoulder the fragment of the weapon, and stopped with styptics and bandages the effusion of blood which followed ; the creature all the while suffering him patiently to perform these kind offices, as if he had been aware of his kind intentions.

‘The animal may be cured,’ said El Hakim, addressing himself to Sir Kenneth, ‘if you will permit me to carry him to my

tent, and treat him with the care which the nobleness of his nature deserves. For know, that thy servant Adonbec is no less skilful in the race, and pedigree, and distinctions of good dogs and of noble steeds than in the diseases which affect the human race.'

'Take him with you,' said the knight. 'I bestow him on you freely if he recovers. I owe thee a reward for attendance on my squire, and have nothing else to pay it with. For myself, I will never again wind bugle or halloo to hound.'

The Arabian made no reply, but gave a signal with a clapping of his hands, which was instantly answered by the appearance of two black slaves. He gave them his orders in Arabic, received the answer, that 'to hear was to obey,' when, taking the animal in their arms, they removed him without much resistance on his part; for, though his eyes turned to his master, he was too weak to struggle.

'Fare thee well, Roswal, then,' said Sir Kenneth — 'fare thee well, my last and only friend; thou art too noble a possession to be retained by one such as I must in future call myself. I would,' he said, as the slaves retired, 'that, dying as he is, I could exchange conditions with that noble animal!'

'It is written,' answered the Arabian, although the exclamation had not been addressed to him, 'that all creatures are fashioned for the service of man; and the master of the earth speaketh folly when he would exchange, in his impatience, his hopes here and to come for the servile condition of an inferior being.'

'A dog who dies in discharging his duty,' said the knight, sternly, 'is better than a man who survives the desertion of it. Leave me, Hakim; thou hast, on this side of miracle, the most wonderful science which man ever possessed, but the wounds of the spirit are beyond thy power.'

'Not if the patient will explain his calamity, and be guided by the physician,' said Adonbec el Hakim.

'Know, then,' said Sir Kenneth, 'since thou art so importunate, that last night the banner of England was displayed from this mound — I was its appointed guardian; morning is now breaking — there lies the broken banner-spear, the standard itself is lost, and here sit I a living man!'

'How!' said El Hakim, examining him; 'thy armour is whole, there is no blood on thy weapons, and report speaks thee one unlikely to return thus from fight. Thou hast been trained from thy post — ay, trained by the rosy cheek and black

eye of one of those houris to whom you Nazarenes vow rather such service as is due to Allah than such love as may lawfully be rendered to forms of clay like our own. It has been thus assuredly ; for so hath man ever fallen, even since the days of Sultan Adam.'

'And if it were so, physician,' said Sir Kenneth, sullenly, 'what remedy?'

'Knowledge is the parent of power,' said El Hakim, 'as valour supplies strength. Listen to me. Man is not as a tree, bound to one spot of earth ; nor is he framed to cling to one bare rock, like the scarce animated shell-fish. Thine own Christian writings command thee, when persecuted in one city, to flee to another ; and we Moslem also know that Mohammed, the Prophet of Allah, driven forth from the holy city of Mecca, found his refuge and his helpmates at Medina.'

'And what does this concern me?' said the Scot.

'Much,' answered the physician. 'Even the sage flies the tempest which he cannot control. Use thy speed, therefore, and fly from the vengeance of Richard to the shadow of Saladin's victorious banner.'

'I might indeed hide my dishonour,' said Sir Kenneth, ironically, 'in a camp of infidel heathens where the very phrase is unknown. But had I not better partake more fully in their reproach? Does not thy advice stretch so far as to recommend me to take the turban? Methinks I want but apostasy to consummate my infamy.'

'Blaspheme not, Nazarene,' said the physician, sternly. 'Saladin makes no converts to the law of the Prophet, save those on whom its precepts shall work conviction. Open thine eyes to the light, and the great Soldan, whose liberality is as boundless as his power, may bestow on thee a kingdom ; remain blinded if thou wilt, and, being one whose second life is doomed to misery, Saladin will yet, for this span of present time, make thee rich and happy. But fear not that thy brows shall be bound with the turban, save at thine own free choice.'

'My choice were rather,' said the knight, 'that my writhen features should blacken, as they are like to do, in this evening's setting sun.'

'Yet thou art not wise, Nazarene,' said El Hakim, 'to reject this fair offer ; for I have power with Saladin, and can raise thee high in his grace. Look you, my son ; this Crusade, as you call your wild enterprise, is like a large dromond parting asunder in the waves. Thou thyself hast borne terms of truce

from the kings and princes whose force is here assembled to the mighty Soldan, and knew'st not, perchance, the full tenor of thine own errand.'

'I knew not, and I care not,' said the knight, impatiently; 'what avails it to me that I have been of late the envoy of princes, when, ere night, I shall be a gibbeted and dishonoured corse?'

'Nay, I speak that it may not be so with thee,' said the physician. 'Saladin is courted on all sides: the combined princes of this league formed against him have made such proposals of composition and peace as, in other circumstances, it might have become his honour to have granted to them. Others have made private offers, on their own separate account, to disjoin their forces from the camp of the kings of Frangistan, and even to lend their arms to the defence of the standard of the Prophet. But Saladin will not be served by such treacherous and interested defection. The King of Kings will treat only with the Lion King: Saladin will hold treaty with none but the Melech Ric, and with him he will treat like a prince, or fight like a champion. To Richard he will yield such conditions of his free liberality as the swords of all Europe could never compel from him by force or terror. He will permit a free pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and all the places where the Nazarenes list to worship; nay, he will so far share even his empire with his brother Richard, that he will allow Christian garrisons in the six strongest cities of Palestine, and one in Jerusalem itself, and suffer them to be under the immediate command of the officers of Richard, who, he consents, shall bear the name of King Guardian of Jerusalem. Yet farther, strange and incredible as you may think it, know, sir knight — for to your honour I can commit even that almost incredible secret — know that Saladin will put a sacred seal on this happy union betwixt the bravest and noblest of Frangistan and Asia, by raising to the rank of his royal spouse a Christian damsel, allied in blood to King Richard, and known by the name of the Lady Edith of Plantagenet.'<sup>1</sup>

'Ha! say'st thou?' exclaimed Sir Kenneth, who, listening with indifference and apathy to the preceding part of El Hakim's speech, was touched by this last communication, as the thrill of a nerve, unexpectedly jarred, will awaken the sensation of agony, even in the torpor of palsy. Then, moderating his tone, by dint of much effort, he restrained his indignation, and, veiling it

<sup>1</sup> See Proposal of Marriage. Note 7.



under the appearance of contemptuous doubt, he prosecuted the conversation, in order to get as much knowledge as possible of the plot, as he deemed it, against the honour and happiness of her whom he loved not the less that his passion had ruined, apparently, his fortunes, at once, and his honour. 'And what Christian,' he said, with tolerable calmness, 'would sanction a union so unnatural as that of a Christian maiden with an unbelieving Saracen?'

'Thou art but an ignorant, bigoted Nazarene,' said the Hakim. 'Seest thou not how the Mohammedan princes daily intermarry with the noble Nazarene maidens in Spain, without scandal either to Moor or Christian? And the noble Soldan will, in his full confidence in the blood of Richard, permit the English maid the freedom which your Frankish manners have assigned to women. He will allow her the free exercise of her religion — seeing that, in very truth, it signifies but little to which faith females are addicted — and he will assign her such place and rank over all the women of his zenana, that she shall be in every respect his sole and absolute queen.'

'What!' said Sir Kenneth, 'darest thou think, Moslem, that Richard would give his kinswoman — a high-born and virtuous princess — to be, at best, the foremost concubine in the haram of a misbeliever? Know, Hakim, the meanest free Christian noble would scorn, on his child's behalf, such splendid ignominy.'

'Thou errest,' said the Hakim: 'Philip of France, and Henry of Champagne, and others of Richard's principal allies, have heard the proposal without starting, and have promised, as far as they may, to forward an alliance that may end these wasteful wars; and the wise arch-priest of Tyre hath undertaken to break the proposal to Richard, not doubting that he shall be able to bring the plan to good issue. The Soldan's wisdom hath as yet kept his proposition secret from others, such as he of Montserrat and the Master of the Templars, because he knows they seek to thrive by Richard's death or disgrace, not by his life or honour. Up, therefore, sir knight, and to horse. I will give thee a scroll which shall advance thee highly with the Soldan; and deem not that you are leaving your country, or her cause, or her religion, since the interest of the two monarchs will speedily be the same. To Saladin thy counsel will be most acceptable, since thou canst make him aware of much concerning the marriages of the Christians, the treatment of their wives, and other points of their laws and usages, which, in the course of such treaty, it much concerns him that he

should know. The right hand of the Soldan grasps the treasures of the East, and it is the fountain of generosity. Or, if thou desirest it, Saladin, when allied with England, can have but little difficulty to obtain from Richard not only thy pardon and restoration to favour, but an honourable command in the troops which may be left of the King of England's host to maintain their joint government in Palestine. Up, then, and mount; there lies a plain path before thee.'

'Hakim,' said the Scottish knight, 'thou art a man of peace; also, thou hast saved the life of Richard of England, and, moreover, of my own poor esquire, Strauchan. I have, therefore, heard to an end a matter which, being propounded by another Moslem than thyself, I would have cut short with a blow of my dagger. Hakim, in return for thy kindness, I advise thee to see that the Saracen who shall propose to Richard a union betwixt the blood of Plantagenet and that of his accursed race do put on a helmet which is capable to endure such a blow of a battle-axe as that which struck down the gate of Acre. Certes, he will be otherwise placed beyond the reach even of thy skill.'

'Thou art, then, wilfully determined not to fly to the Saracen host?' said the physician. 'Yet, remember, thou stayest to certain destruction; and the writings of thy law, as well as ours, prohibit man from breaking into the tabernacle of his own life.'

'God forbid!' replied the Scot, crossing himself; 'but we are also forbidden to avoid the punishment which our crimes have deserved. And, since so poor are thy thoughts of fidelity, Hakim, it grudges me that I have bestowed my good hound on thee, for, should he live, he will have a master ignorant of his value.'

'A gift that is begrudged is already recalled,' said El Hakim, 'only we physicians are sworn not to send away a patient uncured. If the dog recover, he is once more yours.'

'Go to, Hakim,' answered Sir Kenneth; 'men speak not of hawk and hound when there is but an hour of day-breaking betwixt them and death. Leave me to recollect my sins and reconcile myself to Heaven.'

'I leave thee in thine obstinacy,' said the physician: 'the mist hides the precipice from those who are doomed to fall over it.'

He withdrew slowly, turning from time to time his head, as if to observe whether the devoted knight might not recall him

either by word or signal. At last his turbaned figure was lost among the labyrinth of tents which lay extended beneath, whitening in the pale light of the dawning, before which the moonbeam had now faded away.

But although the physician Adonbec's words had not made that impression upon Kenneth which the sage desired, they had inspired the Scot with a motive for desiring life, which, dishonoured as he conceived himself to be, he was before willing to part from as from a sullied vestment no longer becoming his wear. Much that had passed betwixt himself and the hermit, besides what he had observed between the anchorite and Sheerkohf (or Ilderim), he now recalled to recollection, and [all] tended to confirm what the Hakim had told him of the secret article of the treaty.

'The reverend impostor!' he exclaimed to himself—'the hoary hypocrite! He spoke of the unbelieving husband converted by the believing wife; and what do I know but that the traitor exhibited to the Saracen, accursed of God, the beauties of Edith Plantagenet, that the hound might judge if the princely Christian lady were fit to be admitted into the haram of a misbeliever? If I had yonder infidel Ilderim, or whatsoever he is called, again in the gripe with which I once held him fast as ever hound held hare, never again should *he* at least come on errand disgraceful to the honour of Christian king or noble and virtuous maiden. But I—my hours are fast dwindling into minutes; yet, while I have life and breath, something must be done, and speedily.'

He paused for a few minutes, threw from him his helmet, then strode down the hill, and took the road to King Richard's pavilion.

## CHAPTER XV

The feather'd songster, chanticleer,  
Had wound his bugle-horn,  
And told the early villager  
The coming of the morn.  
King Edward saw the ruddy streaks  
Of light eclipse the grey,  
And heard the raven's croaking throat  
Proclaim the fated day.  
'Thou 'rt right,' he said, 'for, by the God  
That sits enthroned on high,  
Charles Bawdwin, and his fellows twain,  
This day shall surely die.'

CHATTERTON.

ON the evening on which Sir Kenneth assumed his post, Richard, after the stormy event which disturbed its tranquillity, had retired to rest in the plenitude of confidence inspired by his unbounded courage, and the superiority which he had displayed in carrying the point he aimed at in presence of the whole Christian host and its leaders, many of whom, he was aware, regarded in their secret souls the disgrace of the Austrian Duke as a triumph over themselves; so that his pride felt gratified that, in prostrating one enemy, he had mortified a hundred.

Another monarch would have doubled his guards on the evening after such a scene, and kept at least a part of his troops under arms. But Cœur-de-Lion dismissed, upon the occasion, even his ordinary watch, and assigned to his soldiers a donative of wine to celebrate his recovery, and to drink to the banner of St. George; and his quarter of the camp would have assumed a character totally devoid of vigilance and military preparation, but that Sir Thomas de Vaux, the Earl of Salisbury, and other nobles, took precautions to preserve order and discipline among the revellers.

The physician attended the King from his retiring to bed till midnight was past, and twice administered medicine to

him during that period, always previously observing the quarter of heaven occupied by the full moon, whose influences he declared to be most sovereign, or most baleful, to the effect of his drugs. It was three hours after midnight ere El Hakim withdrew from the royal tent, to one which had been pitched for himself and his retinue. In his way thither he visited the tent of Sir Kenneth of the Leopard, in order to see the condition of his first patient in the Christian camp, old Strauchan, as the knight's esquire was named. Inquiring there for Sir Kenneth himself, El Hakim learned on what duty he was employed, and probably this information led him to St. George's Mount, where he found him whom he sought in the disastrous circumstances alluded to in the last chapter.

It was about the hour of sunrise, when a slow, armed tread was heard approaching the King's pavilion; and ere De Vaux, who slumbered beside his master's bed as lightly as ever sleep sat upon the eyes of a watch-dog, had time to do more than arise and say, 'Who comes?' the Knight of the Leopard entered the tent, with a deep and devoted gloom seated upon his manly features.

'Whence this bold intrusion, sir knight?' said De Vaux, sternly, yet in a tone which respected his master's slumbers.

'Hold! De Vaux,' said Richard, awaking on the instant; 'Sir Kenneth cometh like a good soldier to render an account of his guard; to such the general's tent is ever accessible.' Then rising from his slumbering posture, and leaning on his elbow, he fixed his large bright eye upon the warrior 'Speak, sir Scot; thou comest to tell me of a vigilant, safe, and honourable watch, dost thou not? The rustling of the folds of the banner of England were enough to guard it, even without the body of such a knight as men hold thee.'

'As men will hold me no more,' said Sir Kenneth. 'My watch hath neither been vigilant, safe, nor honourable. The banner of England has been carried off.'

'And thou alive to tell it?' said Richard, in a tone of derisive incredulity. 'Away, it cannot be. There is not even a scratch on thy face. Why dost thou stand thus mute? Speak the truth; it is ill jesting with a king, yet I will forgive thee if thou hast lied.'

'Lied, Sir King!' returned the unfortunate knight, with fierce emphasis, and one glance of fire from his eye, bright and transient as the flash from the cold and stony flint. 'But this also must be endured. I have spoken the truth.'



'By God and by St. George!' said the King, bursting into fury, which, however, he instantly checked. 'De Vaux, go view the spot. This fever has disturbed his brain. This cannot be. The man's courage is proof. It *cannot* be! Go speedily; or send, if thou wilt not go.'

The King was interrupted by Sir Henry Neville, who came, breathless, to say that the banner was gone, and the knight who guarded it overpowered, and most probably murdered, as there was a pool of blood where the banner-spear lay shivered.

'But whom do I see here?' said Neville, his eyes suddenly resting upon Sir Kenneth.

'A traitor,' said the King, starting to his feet, and seizing the curtal axe, which was ever near his bed — 'a traitor, whom thou shalt see die a traitor's death.' And he drew back the weapon as in act to strike.

Colourless, but firm as a marble statue, the Scot stood before him, with his bare head uncovered by any protection, his eyes cast down to the earth, his lips scarcely moving, yet muttering probably in prayer. Opposite to him, and within the due reach for a blow, stood King Richard, his large person wrapt in the folds of his *camiscia*, or ample gown of linen, except where the violence of his action had flung the covering from his right arm, shoulder, and a part of his breast, leaving to view a specimen of a frame which might have merited his Saxon predecessor's epithet of Ironside. He stood for an instant, prompt to strike; then sinking the head of the weapon towards the ground, he exclaimed, 'But there was blood, Neville — there was blood upon the place. Hark thee, sir Scot, brave thou wert once, for I have seen thee fight. Say thou hast slain two of the thieves in defence of the standard — say but one — say thou hast struck but a good blow in our behalf, and get thee out of the camp with thy life and thy infamy!'

'You have called me liar, my Lord King,' replied Kenneth, firmly; 'and therein, at least, you have done me wrong. Know, that there was no blood shed in defence of the standard save that of a poor hound, which, more faithful than his master, defended the charge which he deserted.'

'Now, by St. George!' said Richard, again heaving up his arm. But De Vaux threw himself between the King and the object of his vengeance, and spoke with the blunt truth of his character — 'My liege, this must not be — here — nor by your own hand. It is enough of folly for one night and day to have

entrusted your banner to a Scot ; said I not they were ever fair and false ?'<sup>1</sup>

'Thou didst, De Vaux ; thou wast right, and I confess it,' said Richard. 'I should have known him better — I should have remembered how the Fox William deceived me touching this Crusade.'

'My lord,' said Sir Kenneth, 'William of Scotland never deceived ; but circumstances prevented his bringing his forces.'

'Peace, shameless !' said the King ; 'thou sulliest the name of a prince, even by speaking it. And yet, De Vaux, it is strange,' he added, 'to see the bearing of the man. Coward or traitor he must be, yet he abode the blow of Richard Plantagenet, as our arm had been raised to lay knighthood on his shoulder. Had he shown the slightest sign of fear — had but a joint trembled, or an eyelid quivered — I had shattered his head like a crystal goblet. But I cannot strike where there is neither fear nor resistance.'

There was a pause.

'My lord ——' said Kenneth.

'Ha !' replied Richard, interrupting him, 'hast thou found thy speech ? Ask grace from Heaven, but none from me, for England is dishonoured through thy fault ; and wert thou mine own and only brother, there is no pardon for thy fault.'

'I speak not to demand grace of mortal man,' said the Scot ; 'it is in your Grace's pleasure to give or refuse me time for Christian shrift ; if man denies it, may God grant me the absolution which I would otherwise ask of His church ! But whether I die on the instant or half an hour hence, I equally beseech your Grace for one moment's opportunity to speak that to your royal person which highly concerns your fame as a Christian king.'

'Say on,' said the King, making no doubt that he was about to hear some confession concerning the loss of the banner.

'What I have to speak,' said Sir Kenneth, 'touches the royalty of England, and must be said to no ears but thine own.'

'Begone with yourselves, sirs,' said the King to Neville and De Vaux.

The first obeyed, but the latter would not stir from the King's presence.

'If you said I was in the right,' replied De Vaux to his sovereign, 'I will be treated as one should be who hath been

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<sup>1</sup> See Scots, Fair and False. Note 8.

found to be right — that is, I will have my own will. I leave you not with this false Scot.'

'How! De Vaux,' said Richard, angrily, and stamping slightly, 'darest thou not venture our person with one traitor?'

'It is in vain you frown and stamp, my lord,' said De Vaux; 'I venture not a sick man with a sound one, a naked man with one armed in proof.'

'It matters not,' said the Scottish knight; 'I seek no excuse to put off time, I will speak in presence of the Lord of Gilsland. He is good lord and true.'

'But half an hour since,' said De Vaux, with a groan, implying a mixture of sorrow and vexation, 'and I had said as much for thee.'

'There is treason around you, King of England,' continued Sir Kenneth.

'It may well be as thou say'st,' replied Richard, 'I have a pregnant example.'

'Treason that will injure thee more deeply than the loss of an hundred banners in a pitched field. The — the' — Sir Kenneth hesitated, and at length continued, in a lower tone — 'the Lady Edith —'

'Ha!' said the King, drawing himself suddenly into a state of haughty attention, and fixing his eye firmly on the supposed criminal. 'What of her? — what of her? — what has she to do with this matter?'

'My lord,' said the Scot, 'there is a scheme on foot to disgrace your royal lineage, by bestowing the hand of the Lady Edith on the Saracen Soldan, and thereby to purchase a peace most dishonourable to Christendom, by an alliance most shameful to England.'

This communication had precisely the contrary effect from that which Sir Kenneth expected. Richard Plantagenet was one of those who, in Iago's words, would not serve God because it was the devil who bade him: advice or information often affected him less according to its real import than through the tinge which it took from the supposed character and views of those by whom it was communicated. Unfortunately, the mention of his relative's name renewed his recollection of what he had considered as extreme presumption in the Knight of the Leopard, even when he stood high in the rolls of chivalry, but which, in his present condition, appeared an insult sufficient to drive the fiery monarch into a frenzy of passion.

'Silence,' he said, 'infamous and audacious! By Heaven, I

will have thy tongue torn out with hot pincers, for mentioning the very name of a noble Christian damsel. Know, degenerate traitor, that I was already aware to what height thou hadst dared to raise thine eyes, and endured it, though it were insolence, even when thou hadst cheated us — for thou art all a deceit — into holding thee as of some name and fame. But now, with lips blistered with the confession of thine own dishonour — that thou shouldst *now* dare to name our noble kinswoman as one in whose fate thou hast part or interest! What is it to thee if she marry Saracen or Christian? What is it to thee if, in a camp where princes turn cowards by day and robbers by night — where brave knights turn to paltry deserters and traitors — what is it, I say, to thee or any one, if I should please to ally myself to truth and to valour in the person of Saladin?’

‘Little to me, indeed, to whom all the world will soon be as nothing,’ answered Sir Kenneth, boldly; ‘but were I now stretched on the rack, I would tell thee, that what I have said is much to thine own conscience and thine own fame. I tell thee, sir king, that if thou dost but in thought entertain the purpose of wedding thy kinswoman, the Lady Edith —’

‘Name her not — and for an instant think not of her,’ said the King, again straining the curtal axe in his gripe, until the muscles started above his brawny arm, like cordage formed by the ivy around the limb of an oak.

‘Not name — not think of her!’ answered Sir Kenneth, his spirits, stunned as they were by self-depression, beginning to recover their elasticity from this species of controversy. ‘Now, by the Cross, on which I place my hope, her name shall be the last word in my mouth, her image the last thought in my mind. Try thy boasted strength on this bare brow, and see if thou canst prevent my purpose.’

‘He will drive me mad!’ said Richard, who, in his despite, was once more staggered in his purpose by the dauntless determination of the criminal.

Ere Thomas of Gilsland could reply, some bustle was heard without, and the arrival of the Queen was announced from the outer part of the pavilion.

‘Detain her — detain her, Neville,’ cried the King; ‘this is no sight for women. Fie, that I have suffered such a paltry traitor to chafe me thus! Away with him, De Vaux,’ he whispered, ‘through the back entrance of our tent; coop him up close, and answer for his safe custody with your life. And

harkye, he is presently to die ; let him have a ghostly father — we would not kill soul and body. And stay, hark thee, we will not have him dishonoured : he shall die knightlike, in his belt and spurs ; for if his treachery be as black as hell, his boldness may match that of the devil himself.'

De Vaux, right glad, if the truth may be guessed, that the scene ended without Richard's descending to the unkingly act of himself slaying an unresisting prisoner, made haste to remove Sir Kenneth by a private issue to a separate tent, where he was disarmed and put in fetters for security. De Vaux looked on with a steady and melancholy attention, while the provost's officers, to whom Sir Kenneth was now committed, took these severe precautions.

When they were ended, he said solemnly to the unhappy criminal, 'It is King Richard's pleasure that you die undegraded, without mutilation of your body or shame to your arms, and that your head be severed from the trunk by the sword of the executioner.'

'It is kind,' said the knight, in a low and rather submissive tone of voice, as one who received an unexpected favour ; 'my family will not then hear the worst of the tale. Oh, my father — my father !'

This muttered invocation did not escape the blunt but kindly-natured Englishman, and he brushed the back of his large hand over his rough features, ere he could proceed.

'It is Richard of England's farther pleasure,' he said, at length, 'that you have speech with a holy man, and I have met on the passage hither with a Carmelite friar, who may fit you for your passage. He waits without, until you are in a frame of mind to receive him.'

'Let it be instantly,' said the knight. 'In this also Richard is kind. I cannot be more fit to see the good father at any time than now ; for life and I have taken farewell, as two travellers who have arrived at the crossway, where their roads separate.'

'It is well,' said De Vaux, slowly and solemnly ; 'for it irks me somewhat to say that which sums my message. It is King Richard's pleasure that you prepare for instant death.'

'God's pleasure and the King's be done,' replied the knight, patiently. 'I neither contest the justice of the sentence nor desire delay of the execution.'

De Vaux began to leave the tent, but very slowly ; paused at the door, and looked back at the Scot, from whose aspect



thoughts of the world seemed banished, as if he was composing himself into deep devotion. The feelings of the stout English baron were in general none of the most acute, and yet, on the present occasion, his sympathy overpowered him in an unusual manner. He came hastily back to the bundle of reeds on which the captive lay, took one of his fettered hands, and said, with as much softness as his rough voice was capable of expressing, 'Sir Kenneth, thou art yet young — thou hast a father. My Ralph, whom I left training his little Galloway nag on the banks of the Irthing, may one day attain thy years; and, but for last night, would to God I saw his youth bear such promise as thine! Can nothing be said or done in thy behalf?'

'Nothing,' was the melancholy answer. 'I have deserted my charge — the banner entrusted to me is lost. When the headsman and block are prepared, the head and trunk are ready to part company.'

'Nay, then, God have mercy!' said De Vaux; 'yet would I rather than my best horse I had taken that watch myself. There is mystery in it, young man, as a plain man may descry, though he cannot see through it. Cowardice? pshaw! No coward ever fought as I have seen thee do. Treachery? I cannot think traitors die in their treason so calmly. Thou hast been trained from thy post by some deep guile — some well-devised stratagem: the cry of some distressed maiden has caught thine ear, or the laughful look of some merry one has taken thine eye. Never blush for it, we have all been led aside by such gear. Come, I pray thee, make a clean conscience of it to me, instead of the priest. Richard is merciful when his mood is abated. Hast thou nothing to entrust to me?'

The unfortunate knight turned his face from the kind warrior, and answered, 'NOTHING.'

And De Vaux, who had exhausted his topics of persuasion, arose and left the tent, with folded arms, and in melancholy deeper than he thought the occasion merited, even angry with himself to find that so simple a matter as the death of a Scottishman could affect him so nearly.

'Yet,' as he said to himself, 'though the rough-footed knaves be our enemies in Cumberland, in Palestine one almost considers them as brethren.'

## CHAPTER XVI

'T is not her sense — for sure, in that  
There's nothing more than common ;  
And all her wit is only chat,  
Like any other woman.

*Song.*

THE high-born Berengaria, daughter of Sanchez, King of Navarre, and the Queen-Consort of the heroic Richard, was accounted one of the most beautiful women of the period. Her form was slight, though exquisitely moulded. She was graced with a complexion not common in her country, a profusion of fair hair, and features so extremely juvenile as to make her look several years younger than she really was, though in reality she was not above one-and-twenty. Perhaps it was under the consciousness of this extremely juvenile appearance that she affected, or at least practised, a little childish petulance and wilfulness of manner, not unbefitting, she might suppose, a youthful bride, whose rank and age gave her a right to have her fantasies indulged and attended to. She was by nature perfectly good-humoured, and if her due share of admiration and homage (in her opinion a very large one) was duly resigned to her, no one could possess better temper or a more friendly disposition ; but then, like all despots, the more power that was voluntarily yielded to her, the more she desired to extend her sway. Sometimes, even when all her ambition was gratified, she chose to be a little out of health and a little out of spirits ; and physicians had to toil their wits to invent names for imaginary maladies, while her ladies racked their imagination for new games, new headgear, and new court-scandal, to pass away those unpleasant hours, during which their own situation was scarce to be greatly envied. Their most frequent resource for diverting this malady was some trick, or piece of mischief, practised upon each other ; and the good queen, in the buoyancy of her reviving spirits, was, to speak truth, rather too indifferent

whether the frolics thus practised were entirely befitting her own dignity, or whether the pain which those suffered upon whom they were inflicted was not beyond the proportion of pleasure which she herself derived from them. She was confident in her husband's favour, in her high rank, and in her supposed power to make good whatever such pranks might cost others. In a word, she gamboled with the freedom of a young lioness, who is unconscious of the weight of her own paws when laid on those whom she sports with.

The Queen Berengaria loved her husband passionately, but she feared the loftiness and roughness of his character, and as she felt herself not to be his match in intellect, was not much pleased to see that he would often talk with Edith Plantagenet in preference to herself, simply because he found more amusement in her conversation, a more comprehensive understanding, and a more noble cast of thoughts and sentiments, than his beautiful consort exhibited. Berengaria did not hate Edith on this account, far less meditate her any harm; for, allowing for some selfishness, her character was, on the whole, innocent and generous. But the ladies of her train, sharp-sighted in such matters, had for some time discovered that a poignant jest at the expense of the Lady Edith was a specific for relieving her Grace of England's low spirits, and the discovery saved their imagination much toil.

There was something ungenerous in this, because the Lady Edith was understood to be an orphan; and though she was called Plantagenet, and the Fair Maid of Anjou, and admitted by Richard to certain privileges only granted to the royal family, and held her place in the circle accordingly, yet few knew, and none acquainted with the court of England ventured to ask, in what exact degree of relationship she stood to Cœur-de-Lion. She had come with Eleanor, the celebrated Queen-Mother of England, and joined Richard at Messina, as one of the ladies destined to attend on Berengaria, whose nuptials then approached. Richard treated his kinswoman with much respectful observance, and the Queen made her her most constant attendant, and, even in despite of the petty jealousy which we have observed, treated her, generally, with suitable respect.

The ladies of the household had, for a long time, no further advantage over Edith than might be afforded by an opportunity of censuring a less artfully-disposed head-attire or an unbecoming robe; for the lady was judged to be inferior in these mysteries. The silent devotion of the Scottish knight

did not, indeed, pass unnoticed : his liveries, his cognizances, his feats of arms, his mottoes and devices, were nearly watched, and occasionally made the subject of a passing jest. But then came the pilgrimage of the Queen and her ladies to Engaddi — a journey which the Queen had undertaken under a vow for the recovery of her husband's health, and which she had been encouraged to carry into effect by the Archbishop of Tyre for a political purpose. It was then, and in the chapel at that holy place, connected from above with a Carmelite nunnery, from beneath with the cell of the anchorite, that one of the Queen's attendants remarked that secret sign of intelligence which Edith had made to her lover, and failed not instantly to communicate it to her Majesty. The Queen returned from her pilgrimage enriched with this admirable recipe against dulness or *ennui*, and her train was at the same time augmented by a present of two wretched dwarfs from the dethroned Queen of Jerusalem, as deformed and as crazy (the excellence of that unhappy species) as any queen could have desired. One of Berengaria's idle amusements had been to try the effect of the sudden appearance of such ghastly and fantastic forms on the nerves of the knight when left alone in the chapel ; but the jest had been lost by the composure of the Scot and the interference of the anchorite. She had now tried another, of which the consequences promised to be more serious.

The ladies again met after Sir Kenneth had retired from the tent ; and the Queen, at first little moved by Edith's angry expostulations, only replied to her by upbraiding her prudery, and by indulging her wit at the expense of the garb, nation, and, above all, the poverty, of the Knight of the Leopard, in which she displayed a good deal of playful malice, mingled with some humour, until Edith was compelled to carry her anxiety to her separate apartment. But when, in the morning, a female, whom Edith had entrusted to make inquiry, brought word that the standard was missing, and its champion vanished, she burst into the Queen's apartment, and implored her to rise and proceed to the King's tent without delay, and use her powerful mediation to prevent the evil consequences of her jest.

The Queen, frightened in her turn, cast, as is usual, the blame of her own folly on those around her, and endeavoured to comfort Edith's grief, and appease her displeasure, by a thousand inconsistent arguments. She was sure no harm had chanced : the knight was sleeping, she fancied, after his night

watch. What though, for fear of the King's displeasure, he had deserted with the standard — it was but a piece of silk, and he but a needy adventurer ; or, if he was put under warding for a time, she would soon get the King to pardon him — it was but waiting to let Richard's mood pass away.

Thus she continued talking thick and fast, and heaping together all sorts of inconsistencies, with the vain expectation of persuading both Edith and herself that no harm could come of a frolic which in her heart she now bitterly repented. But while Edith in vain strove to intercept this torrent of idle talk, she caught the eye of one of the ladies who entered the Queen's apartment. There was death in her look of affright and horror, and Edith, at the first glance of her countenance, had sunk at once on the earth, had not strong necessity, and her own elevation of character, enabled her to maintain at least external composure.

'Madam,' she said to the Queen, 'lose not another word in speaking, but save life ; if, indeed,' she added, her voice choking as she said it, 'life may yet be saved.'

'It may be — it may,' answered the Lady Calista. 'I have just heard that he has been brought before the King ; it is not yet over, but,' she added, bursting into a vehement flood of weeping, in which personal apprehensions had some share, 'it will soon, unless some course be taken.'

'I will vow a golden candlestick to the Holy Sepulchre — a shrine of silver to our Lady of Engaddi — a pall, worth one hundred bezants, to St. Thomas of Orthez,' said the Queen, in extremity.

'Up — up, madam !' said Edith ; 'call on the saints if you list, but be your own best saint.'

'Indeed, madam,' said the terrified attendant, 'the Lady Edith speaks truth. Up, madam, and let us to King Richard's tent, and beg the poor gentleman's life.'

'I will go — I will go instantly,' said the Queen, rising and trembling excessively ; while her women, in as great confusion as herself, were unable to render her those duties which were indispensable to her levee. Calm, composed, only pale as death, Edith ministered to the Queen with her own hand, and alone supplied the deficiencies of her numerous attendants.

'How you wait, wenches !' said the Queen, not able even then to forget frivolous distinctions. 'Suffer ye the Lady Edith to do the duties of your attendance ? Seest thou, Edith, they can do nothing : I shall never be attired in time. We



will send for the Archbishop of Tyre, and employ him as a mediator.'

'O no — no!' exclaimed Edith. 'Go yourself, madam; you have done the evil, do you confer the remedy.'

'I will go — I will go,' said the Queen; 'but if Richard be in his mood, I dare not speak to him; he will kill me!'

'Yet go, gracious madam,' said the Lady Calista, who best knew her mistress's temper; 'not a lion, in his fury, could look upon such a face and form, and retain so much as an angry thought, far less a love-true knight like the royal Richard, to whom your slightest word would be a command.'

'Dost thou think so, Calista?' said the Queen. 'Ah, thou little knowest — yet I will go. But see you here — what means this? You have bedizened me in green, a colour he detests. Lo you! let me have a blue robe, and — search for the ruby carcanet, which was part of the King of Cyprus's ransom; it is either in the steel-casket or somewhere else.'

'This, and a man's life at stake!' said Edith, indignantly; 'it passes human patience. Remain at your ease, madam; I will go to King Richard. I am a party interested; I will know if the honour of a poor maiden of his blood is to be so far tampered with, that her name shall be abused to train a brave gentleman from his duty, bring him within the compass of death and infamy, and make, at the same time, the glory of England a laughing-stock to the whole Christian army.'

At this unexpected burst of passion, Berengaria listened with an almost stupified look of fear and wonder. But as Edith was about to leave the tent, she exclaimed, though faintly, 'Stop her — stop her!'

'You must indeed stop, noble Lady Edith,' said Calista, taking her arm gently; 'and you, royal madam, I am sure, will go, and without farther dallying. If the Lady Edith goes alone to the King, he will be dreadfully incensed, nor will it be one life that will stay his fury.'

'I will go — I will go,' said the Queen, yielding to necessity; and Edith reluctantly halted to wait her movements.

They were now as speedy as she could have desired. The Queen hastily wrapped herself in a large loose mantle, which covered all inaccuracies of the toilet. In this guise, attended by Edith and her women, and preceded and followed by a few officers and men-at-arms, she hastened to the tent of her lion-like husband.

## CHAPTER XVII

Were every hair upon his head a life,  
And every life were to be supplicated  
By numbers equal to those hairs quadrupled,  
Life after life should out like waning stars  
Before the daybreak ; or as festive lamps,  
Which have lent lustre to the midnight revel,  
Each after each are quench'd when guests depart !

*Old Play.*

THE entrance of Queen Berengaria into the interior of Richard's pavilion was withstood, in the most respectful and reverential manner indeed, but still withstood, by the chamberlains who watched in the outer tent. She could hear the stern command of the King from within, prohibiting their entrance.

'You see,' said the Queen, appealing to Edith, as if she had exhausted all means of intercession in her power — 'I knew it ; the King will not receive us.'

At the same time, they heard Richard speak to some one within — 'Go, speed thine office quickly, sirrah, for in that consists thy mercy ; ten byzants if thou deal'st on him at one blow. And, hark thee, villain, observe if his cheek loses colour or his eye falters ; mark me the smallest twitch of the features or wink of the eyelid ; I love to know how brave souls meet death.'

'If he sees my blade waved aloft without shrinking, he is the first ever did so,' answered a harsh, deep voice, which a sense of unusual awe had softened into a sound much lower than its usual coarse tones.

Edith could remain silent no longer. 'If your Grace,' she said to the Queen, 'make not your own way, I make it for you ; or if not for your Majesty, for myself, at least. Chamberlains, the Queen demands to see King Richard — the wife to speak with her husband.'

'Noble lady,' said the officer, lowering his wand of office, 'it grieves me to gainsay you ; but his Majesty is busied on matters of life and death.'

'And we seek also to speak with him on matters of life and

death,' said Edith. 'I will make entrance for your Grace.' And putting aside the chamberlain with one hand, she laid hold on the curtain with the other.

'I dare not gainsay her Majesty's pleasure,' said the chamberlain, yielding to the vehemence of the fair petitioner; and, as he gave way, the Queen found herself obliged to enter the apartment of Richard.

The monarch was lying on his couch, and at some distance, as awaiting his farther commands, stood a man whose profession it was not difficult to conjecture. He was clothed in a jerkin of red cloth, which reached scantily below the shoulders, leaving the arms bare from about half-way above the elbow, and, as an upper garment, he wore, when about as at present to betake himself to his dreadful office, a coat or tabard without sleeves, something like that of a herald, made of dressed bull's hide, and stained in the front with many a broad spot and speckle of dull crimson. The jerkin, and the tabard over it, reached the knee, and the nether stocks, or covering of the legs, were of the same leather which composed the tabard. A cap of rough shag served to hide the upper part of a visage which, like that of a screech-owl, seemed desirous to conceal itself from light; the lower part of the face being obscured by a huge red beard, mingling with shaggy locks of the same colour. What features were seen were stern and misanthropical. The man's figure was short, strongly made, with a neck like a bull, very broad shoulders, arms of great and disproportioned length, a huge square trunk, and thick bandy legs. This truculent official leant on a sword the blade of which was nearly four feet and a half in length, while the handle of twenty inches, surrounded by a ring of lead plummets to counterpoise the weight of such a blade, rose considerably above the man's head, as he rested his arm upon its hilt, waiting for King Richard's farther directions.

On the sudden entrance of the ladies, Richard, who was then lying on his couch, with his face towards the entrance, and resting on his elbow as he spoke to his grisly attendant, flung himself hastily, as if displeased and surprised, to the other side, turning his back to the Queen and the females of her train, and drawing around him the covering of his couch, which, by his own choice, or more probably the flattering selection of his chamberlains, consisted of two large lions' skins, dressed in Venice with such admirable skill that they seemed softer than the hide of the deer.

Berengaria, such as we have described her, knew well — what woman knows not? — her own road to victory. After a hurried glance of undisguised and unaffected terror at the ghastly companion of her husband's secret counsels, she rushed at once to the side of Richard's couch, dropped on her knees, flung her mantle from her shoulder, showing, as they hung down at their full length, her beautiful golden tresses, and while her countenance seemed like the sun bursting through a cloud, yet bearing on its pallid front traces that its splendours have been obscured, she seized upon the right hand of the King, which, as he assumed his wonted posture, had been employed in dragging the covering of his couch, and gradually pulling it to her with a force which was resisted, though but faintly, she possessed herself of that arm, the prop of Christendom and the dread of Heathenesse, and, imprisoning its strength in both her little fairy hands, she bent upon it her brow, and united to it her lips.

'What needs this, Berengaria?' said Richard, his head still averted, but his hand remaining under her control.

'Send away that man — his look kills me!' muttered Berengaria.

'Begone, sirrah,' said Richard, still without looking round, 'what wait'st thou for? art thou fit to look on these ladies?'

'Your Highness's pleasure touching the head,' said the man.

'Out with thee, dog!' answered Richard — 'a Christian burial.'

The man disappeared, after casting a look upon the beautiful Queen, in her deranged dress and natural loveliness, with a smile of admiration more hideous in its expression than even his usual scowl of cynical hatred against humanity.

'And now, foolish wench, what wishest thou?' said Richard, turning slowly and half-reluctantly round to his royal suppliant.

But it was not in nature for any one, far less an admirer of beauty like Richard, to whom it stood only in the second rank to glory, to look without emotion on the countenance and the tremor of a creature so beautiful as Berengaria, or to feel, without sympathy, that her lips, her brow, were on his hand, and that it was wetted by her tears. By degrees, he turned on her his manly countenance, with the softest expression of which his large blue eye, which so often gleamed with insufferable light, was capable. Caressing her fair head, and mingling his large fingers in her beautiful and dishevelled

locks, he raised and tenderly kissed the cherub countenance which seemed desirous to hide itself in his hand. The robust form, the broad, noble brow, and majestic looks, the naked arm and shoulder, the lions' skins among which he lay, and the fair fragile feminine creature that kneeled by his side, might have served for a model of Hercules reconciling himself, after a quarrel, to his wife Dejanira.

'And, once more, what seeks the lady of my heart in her knight's pavilion, at this early and unwonted hour?'

'Pardon, my most gracious liege — pardon!' said the Queen, whose fears began again to unfit her for the duty of intercessor.

'Pardon! for what?' asked the King.

'First, for entering your royal presence too boldly and unadvisedly ——' She stopped.

'*Thou too boldly!* the sun might as well ask pardon because his rays entered the windows of some wretch's dungeon. But I was busied with work unfit for thee to witness, my gentle one, and I was unwilling, besides, that thou shouldst risk thy precious health where sickness has been so lately rife.'

'But thou art now well?' said the Queen, still delaying the communication which she feared to make.

'Well enough to break a lance on the bold crest of that champion who shall refuse to acknowledge thee the fairest dame in Christendom.'

'Thou wilt not then refuse me one boon — only one — only a poor life?'

'Ha! proceed,' said King Richard, bending his brows.

'This unhappy Scottish knight,' murmured the Queen.

'Speak not of him, madam,' exclaimed Richard, sternly; 'he dies — his doom is fixed.'

'Nay, my royal liege and love, 'tis but a silken banner neglected; Berengaria will give thee another broidered with her own hand, and rich as ever dallied with the wind. Every pearl I have shall go to bedeck it, and with every pearl I will drop a tear of thankfulness to my generous knight.'

'Thou know'st not what thou say'st,' said the King, interrupting her in anger. 'Pearls! can all the pearls of the East atone for a speck upon England's honour — all the tears that ever woman's eye wept wash away a stain on Richard's fame? Go to, madam, know your place, and your time, and your sphere. At present we have duties in which you cannot be our partner.'



'Thou hear'st, Edith,' whispered the Queen, 'we shall but incense him.'

'Be it so,' said Edith, stepping forward. 'My lord — I, your poor kinswoman, crave you for justice rather than mercy; and to the cry of justice the ears of a monarch should be open at every time, place, and circumstance.'

'Ha! our cousin Edith!' said Richard, rising and sitting upright on the side of his couch, covered with his long camiseia. 'She speaks ever kinglike, and kinglike will I answer her, so she bring no request unworthy herself or me.'

The beauty of Edith was of a more intellectual and less voluptuous cast than that of the Queen; but impatience and anxiety had given her countenance a glow which it sometimes wanted, and her mien had a character of energetic dignity that imposed silence for a moment even on Richard himself, who, to judge by his looks, would willingly have interrupted her.

'My lord,' she said, 'this good knight, whose blood you are about to spill, hath done, in his time, service to Christendom. He hath fallen from his duty through a snare set for him in mere folly and idleness of spirit. A message sent to him in the name of one who — why should I not speak it? — it was in my own — induced him for an instant to leave his post. And what knight in the Christian camp might not have thus far transgressed at command of a maiden who, poor howsoever in other qualities, hath yet the blood of Plantagenet in her veins?'

'And you saw him, then, cousin?' replied the King, biting his lips to keep down his passion.

'I did, my liege,' said Edith. 'It is no time to explain wherefore: I am here neither to exculpate myself nor to blame others.'

'And where did you do him such a grace?'

'In the tent of her Majesty the Queen.'

'Of our royal consort!' said Richard. 'Now by Heaven, by St. George of England, and every other saint that treads its crystal floor, this is too audacious! I have noticed and overlooked this warrior's insolent admiration of one so far above him, and I grudged him not that one of my blood should shed from her high-born sphere such influence as the sun bestows on the world beneath. But, heaven and earth! that you should have admitted him to an audience by night, in the very tent of our royal consort, and dare to offer this as an excuse for his disobedience and desertion! By my father's soul, Edith, thou shalt rue this thy life long in a monastery!'

'My liege,' said Edith, 'your greatness licenses tyranny. My honour, Lord King, is as little touched as yours, and my Lady the Queen can prove it if she think fit. But I have already said, I am not here to excuse myself or inculcate others. I ask you but to extend to one whose fault was committed under strong temptation that mercy which even you yourself, Lord King, must one day supplicate at a higher tribunal, and for faults, perhaps, less venial.'

'Can this be Edith Plantagenet?' said the King, bitterly — 'Edith Plantagenet, the wise and the noble? Or is it some love-sick woman, who cares not for her own fame in comparison of the life of her paramour? Now, by King Henry's soul! little hinders but I order thy minion's skull to be brought from the gibbet, and fixed as a perpetual ornament by the crucifix in thy cell.'

'And if thou dost send it from the gibbet to be placed for ever in my sight,' said Edith, 'I will say it is a relic of a good knight, cruelly and unworthily done to death by — (she checked herself) — by one of whom I shall only say, he should have known better how to reward chivalry. Minion call'st thou him?' she continued, with increasing vehemence. 'He was indeed my lover, and a most true one; but never sought he grace from me by look or word, contented with such humble observance as men pay to the saints. And the good — the valiant — the faithful must die for this!'

'O, peace — peace, for pity's sake,' whispered the Queen, 'you do but offend him more!'

'I care not,' said Edith: 'the spotless virgin fears not the raging lion. Let him work his will on this worthy knight. Edith, for whom he dies, will know how to weep his memory: to me no one shall speak more of politic alliances, to be sanctioned with this poor hand. I could not — I would not — have been his bride living — our degrees were too distant. But death unites the high and the low: I am henceforward the spouse of the grave.'

The King was about to answer with much anger, when a Carmelite monk entered the apartment hastily, his head and person muffled in the long mantle and hood of striped cloth of the coarsest texture which distinguished his order, and, flinging himself on his knees before the King, conjured him, by every holy word and sign, to stop the execution.

'Now, by both sword and sceptre,' said Richard, 'the world are leagued to drive me mad! Fools, women, and monks cross me at every step. How comes he to live still?'

'My gracious liege,' said the monk, 'I entreated of the Lord of Gilsland to stay the execution until I had thrown myself at your royal ——'

'And he was wilful enough to grant thy request?' said the King; 'but it is of a piece with his wonted obstinacy. And what is it thou hast to say? Speak, in the fiend's name!'

'My lord, there is a weighty secret — but it rests under the seal of confession — I dare not tell or even whisper it; but I swear to thee by my holy order, by the habit which I wear, by the blessed Elias, our founder, even him who was translated without suffering the ordinary pangs of mortality, that this youth hath divulged to me a secret which, if I might confide it to thee, would utterly turn thee from thy bloody purpose in regard to him.'

'Good father,' said Richard, 'that I reverence the church, let the arms which I now wear for her sake bear witness. Give me to know this secret, and I will do what shall seem fitting in the matter. But I am no blind Bayard, to take a leap in the dark under the stroke of a pair of priestly spurs.'

'My lord,' said the holy man, throwing back his cowl and upper vesture, and discovering under the latter a garment of goat-skin, and from beneath the former a visage so wildly wasted by climate, fast, and penance as to resemble rather the apparition of an animated skeleton than a human face, 'for twenty years have I macerated this miserable body in the caverns of Engaddi, doing penance for a great crime. Think you I, who am dead to the world, would contrive a falsehood to endanger my own soul, or that one bound by the most sacred oaths to the contrary — one such as I, who have but one longing wish connected with earth, to wit, the rebuilding of our Christian Zion — would betray the secrets of the confessional? Both are alike abhorrent to my very soul.'

'So,' answered the King, 'thou art that hermit of whom men speak so much? Thou art, I confess, like enough to those spirits which walk in dry places, but Richard fears no hobgoblins; and thou art he, too, as I bethink me, to whom the Christian princes sent this very criminal to open a communication with the Soldan, even while I, who ought to have been first consulted, lay on my sick-bed? Thou and they may content themselves, I will not put my neck into the loop of a Carmelite's girdle. And, for your envoy, he shall die, the rather and the sooner that thou dost entreat for him.'

'Now God be gracious to thee, Lord King!' said the hermit,

with much emotion; 'thou art setting that mischief on foot which thou wilt hereafter wish thou hadst stopt, though it had cost thee a limb. Rash, blinded man, yet forbear!'

'Away — away,' cried the King, stamping; 'the sun has risen on the dishonour of England, and it is not yet avenged. Ladies and priest, withdraw, if ye would not hear orders which would displease you; for, by St. George, I swear ——'

'Swear NOT!' said the voice of one who had just then entered the pavilion.

'Ha! my learned Hakim,' said the King; 'come, I hope, to tax our generosity.'

'I come to request instant speech with you — instant — and touching matters of deep interest.'

'First look on my wife, Hakim, and let her know in you the preserver of her husband.'

'It is not for me,' said the physician, folding his arms with an air of Oriental modesty and reverence, and bending his eyes on the ground — 'it is not for me to look upon beauty unveiled, and armed in its splendours.'

'Retire, then, Berengaria,' said the monarch; 'and, Edith, do you retire also. Nay, renew not your importunities! This I give to them, that the execution shall not be till high noon. Go and be pacified. Dearest Berengaria, begone. Edith,' he added, with a glance which struck terror even into the courageous soul of his kinswoman, 'go, if you are wise.'

The females withdrew, or rather hurried from the tent, rank and ceremony forgotten, much like a flock of wild-fowl huddled together, against whom the falcon has made a recent stoop.

They returned from thence to the Queen's pavilion, to indulge in regrets and recriminations, equally unavailing. Edith was the only one who seemed to disdain these ordinary channels of sorrow. Without a sigh, without a tear, without a word of upbraiding, she attended upon the Queen, whose weak temperament showed her sorrow in violent hysterical ecstasies, and passionate hypochondriacal effusions, in the course of which Edith sedulously, and even affectionately, attended her.

'It is impossible she can have loved this knight,' said Florise to Calista, her senior in attendance upon the Queen's person. 'We have been mistaken; she is but sorry for his fate, as for a stranger who has come to trouble on her account.'

'Hush — hush,' answered her more experienced and more observant comrade; 'she is of that proud house of Plantagenet,

who never own that a hurt grieves them. While they have themselves been bleeding to death under a mortal wound, they have been known to bind up the scratches sustained by their more faint-hearted comrades. Florise, we have done frightfully wrong ; and, for my own part, I would buy with every jewel I have, that our fatal jest had remained unacted.'



## CHAPTER XVIII

This work desires a planetary intelligence  
Of Jupiter and Sol ; and those great spirits  
Are proud, fantastical. It asks great charges  
To entice them from the guiding of their spheres,  
To wait on mortals.

*Albunazar.*

THE hermit followed the ladies from the pavilion of Richard, as shadow follows a beam of sunshine when the clouds are driving over the face of the sun. But he turned on the threshold, and held up his hand towards the King in a warning, or almost a menacing, posture, as he said — ‘Woe to him who rejects the counsel of the church, and betaketh himself to the foul divan of the infidel ! King Richard, I do not yet shake the dust from my feet and depart from thy encampment : the sword falls not, but it hangs but by a hair. Haughty monarch, we shall meet again.’

‘Be it so, haughty priest,’ returned Richard — ‘prouder in thy goat-skins than princes in purple and fine linen.’

The hermit vanished from the tent, and the King continued, addressing the Arabian, ‘Do the dervises of the East, wise Hakim, use such familiarity with their princes ?’

‘The dervise,’ replied Adonbec, ‘should be either a sage or a madman ; there is no middle course for him who wears the *khirkhak*,<sup>1</sup> who watches by night and fasts by day. Hence hath he either wisdom enough to bear himself discreetly in the presence of princes, or else, having no reason bestowed on him, he is not responsible for his own actions.’

‘Methinks our monks have adopted chiefly the latter character,’ said Richard. ‘But to the matter. In what can I pleasure you, my learned physician ?’

‘Great King,’ said El Hakim, making his profound Oriental obeisance, ‘let thy servant speak one word, and yet live. I would remind thee that thou owest — not to me, their humble

<sup>1</sup> Literally, the torn robe. The habit of the dervises is so called.

instrument — but to the Intelligences, whose benefits I dispense to mortals, a life ——’

‘And I warrant me thou wouldst have another in requital, ha?’ interrupted the King.

‘Such is my humble prayer,’ said the Hakim, ‘to the great Melech Ric, even the life of this good knight, who is doomed to die, and but for such fault as was committed by the Sultan Adam, surnamed Aboulbeschar, or the father of all men.’

‘And thy wisdom might remind thee, Hakim, that Adam died for it,’ said the King, somewhat sternly, and then began to pace the narrow space of his tent, with some emotion, and to talk to himself. ‘Why, God-a-mercy, I knew what he desired as soon as ever he entered the pavilion! Here is one poor life justly condemned to extinction, and I, a king and a soldier, who have slain thousands by my command, and scores with my own hand, am to have no power over it, although the honour of my arms, of my house, of my very Queen, hath been attainted by the culprit. By St. George, it makes me laugh! By St. Louis, it reminds me of Blondel’s tale of an enchanted castle, where the destined knight was withstood successively in his purpose of entrance by forms and figures the most dissimilar, but all hostile to his undertaking. No sooner one sunk than another appeared. Wife — kinswoman — hermit — Hakim — each appears in the lists as soon as the other is defeated. Why, this is a single knight fighting against the whole *mêlée* of the tournament — ha! ha! ha!’ And Richard laughed aloud; for he had, in fact, begun to change his mood, his resentment being usually too violent to be of long endurance.

The physician meanwhile looked on him with a countenance of surprise, not unmingled with contempt; for the Eastern people make no allowance for those mercurial changes in the temper, and consider open laughter, upon almost any account, as derogatory to the dignity of man, and becoming only to women and children. At length, the sage addressed the King, when he saw him more composed.

‘A doom of death should not issue from laughing lips. Let thy servant hope that thou hast granted him this man’s life.’

‘Take the freedom of a thousand captives instead,’ said Richard: ‘restore so many of thy countrymen to their tents and families, and I will give the warrant instantly. This man’s life can avail thee nothing, and it is forfeited.’

‘All our lives are forfeited,’ said the Hakim, putting his

hand to his cap. 'But the great Creditor is merciful, and exacts not the pledge rigorously nor untimely.'

'Thou canst show me,' said Richard, 'no special interest thou hast to become intercessor betwixt me and the execution of justice, to which I am sworn as a crowned king.'

'Thou art sworn to the dealing forth mercy as well as justice,' said El Hakim; 'but what thou seekest, great King, is the execution of thine own will. And, for the concern I have in this request, know that many a man's life depends upon thy granting this boon.'

'Explain thy words,' said Richard; 'but think not to impose upon me by false pretexts.'

'Be it far from thy servant!' said Adonbec. 'Know, then, that the medicine to which thou, sir king, and many one beside owe their recovery is a talisman, composed under certain aspects of the heavens, when the Divine Intelligences are most propitious. I am but the poor administrator of its virtues. I dip it in a cup of water, observe the fitting hour to administer it to the patient, and the potency of the draught works the cure.'

'A most rare medicine,' said the King, 'and a commodious! and, as it may be carried in the leech's purse, would save the whole caravan of camels which they require to convey drugs and physic-stuff. I marvel there is any other in use.'

'It is written,' answered the Hakim, with imperturbable gravity, "'Abuse not the steed which hath borne thee from the battle.'" Know, that such talismans might indeed be framed, but rare has been the number of adepts who have dared to undertake the application of their virtue. Severe restrictions, painful observances, fasts, and penance are necessary on the part of the sage who uses this mode of cure; and if, through neglect of these preparations, by his love of ease, or his indulgence of sensual appetite, he omits to cure at least twelve persons within the course of each moon, the virtue of the divine gift departs from the amulet, and both the last patient and the physician will be exposed to speedy misfortune, neither will they survive the year. I require yet one life to make up the appointed number.'

'Go out into the camp, good Hakim, where thou wilt find a many,' said the King, 'and do not seek to rob my headsman of *his* patients; it is unbecoming a mediciner of thine eminence to interfere with the practice of another. Besides, I cannot see how delivering a criminal from the death he deserves should go to make up thy tale of miraculous cures.'

'When thou canst show why a draught of cold water should have cured thee, when the most precious drugs failed,' said the Hakim, 'thou mayst reason on the other mysteries attendant on this matter. For myself, I am inefficient to the great work, having this morning touched an unclean animal. Ask, therefore, no farther questions; it is enough that, by sparing this man's life at my request, you will deliver yourself, great King, and thy servant from a great danger.'

'Hark thee, Adonbec,' replied the King, 'I have no objection that leeches should wrap their words in mist, and pretend to derive knowledge from the stars; but when you bid Richard Plantagenet fear that a danger will fall upon *him* from some idle omen or omitted ceremonial, you speak to no ignorant Saxon, or doting old woman, who foregoes her purpose because a hare crosses the path, a raven croaks, or a cat sneezes.'

'I cannot hinder your doubt of my words,' said Adonbec; 'but yet, let my Lord the King grant that truth is on the tongue of his servant, will he think it just to deprive the world, and every wretch who may suffer by the pains which so lately reduced him to that couch, of the benefit of this most virtuous talisman, rather than extend his forgiveness to one poor criminal? Bethink you, Lord King, that, though thou canst slay thousands, thou canst not restore one man to health. Kings have the power of Satan to torment, sages that of Allah to heal; beware how thou hinderest the good to humanity which thou canst not thyself render. Thou canst cut off the head, but not cure the aching tooth.'

'This is over-insolent,' said the King, hardening himself, as the Hakim assumed a more lofty, and almost a commanding, tone. 'We took thee for our leech, not for our counsellor or conscience-keeper.'

'And is it thus the most renowned prince of Frangistan repays benefit done to his royal person?' said El Hakim, exchanging the humble and stooping posture in which he had hitherto solicited the King for an attitude lofty and commanding. 'Know, then,' he said, 'that through every court of Europe and Asia — to Moslem and Nazarene — to knight and lady — wherever harp is heard and sword worn — wherever honour is loved and infamy detested — to every quarter of the world will I denounce thee, Melech Ric, as thankless and ungenerous; and even the lands — if there be any such — that never heard of thy renown shall yet be acquainted with thy shame!'

'Are these terms to me, vile infidel?' said Richard, striding up to him in fury. 'Art weary of thy life?'

'Strike!' said El Hakim; 'thine own deed shall then paint thee more worthless than could my words, though each had an hornet's sting.'

Richard turned fiercely from him, folded his arms, traversed the tent as before, and then exclaimed, 'Thankless and ungenerous! as well be termed coward and infidel. Hakim, thou hast chosen thy boon; and though I had rather thou hadst asked my crown-jewels, yet I may not, kinglike, refuse thee. Take this Scot, therefore, to thy keeping; the provost will deliver him to thee on this warrant.'

He hastily traced one or two lines, and gave them to the physician. 'Use him as thy bond-slave, to be disposed of as thou wilt; only let him beware how he comes before the eyes of Richard. Hark thee — thou art wise — he hath been overbold among those in whose fair looks and weak judgments we trust our honour, as you of the East lodge your treasures in caskets of silver wire, as fine and as frail as the web of a gossamer.'

'Thy servant understands the words of the King,' said the sage, at once resuming the reverent style of address in which he had commenced. 'When the rich carpet is soiled, the fool pointeth to the stain, the wise man covers it with his mantle, I have heard my lord's pleasure, and to hear is to obey.'

'It is well,' said the King; 'let him consult his own safety, and never appear in my presence more. Is there aught else in which I may do thee pleasure?'

'The bounty of the King hath filled my cup to the brim,' said the sage; 'yea, it hath been abundant as the fountain which sprung up amid the camp of the descendants of Israel, when the rock was stricken by the rod of Moussa ben Amran.'

'Ay, but,' said the King, smiling, 'it required, as in the desert, a hard blow on the rock, ere it yielded its treasures. I would that I knew something to pleasure thee, which I might yield as freely as the natural fountain sends forth its waters.'

'Let me touch that victorious hand,' said the sage, 'in token that, if Adonbec el Hakim should hereafter demand a boon of Richard of England, he may do so, yet plead his command.'

'Thou hast hand and glove upon it, man,' replied Richard; 'only, if thou couldst consistently make up thy tale of patients without craving me to deliver from punishment those who have



deserved it, I would more willingly discharge my debt in some other form.'

'May thy days be multiplied!' answered the Hakim, and withdrew from the apartment after the usual deep obeisance.

King Richard gazed after him as he departed, like one but half-satisfied with what had passed.

'Strange pertinacity,' he said, 'in this Hakim, and a wonderful chance to interfere between that audacious Scot and the chastisement he has merited so richly. Yet, let him live! there is one brave man the more in the world. And now for the Austrian. Ho, is the Baron of Gilsland there without?'

Sir Thomas de Vaux thus summoned, his bulky form speedily darkened the opening of the pavilion, while behind him glided as a spectre, unannounced yet unopposed, the savage form of the hermit of Engaddi, wrapped in his goat-skin mantle.

Richard, without noticing his presence, called in a loud tone to the baron, 'Sir Thomas de Vaux of Lanercost and Gilsland, take trumpet and herald, and go instantly to the tent of him whom they call Archduke of Austria, and see that it be when the press of his knights and vassals is greatest around him, as is likely at this hour, for the German boar breakfasts ere he hears mass; enter his presence with as little reverence as thou mayst, and impeach him, on the part of Richard of England, that he hath this night, by his own hand or that of others, stolen from its staff the banner of England. Wherefore, say to him our pleasure that, within an hour from the time of my speaking, he restore the said banner with all reverence, he himself and his principal barons waiting the whilst with heads uncovered, and without their robes of honour. And that, moreover, he pitch beside it, on the one hand, his own banner of Austria reversed, as that which hath been dishonoured by theft and felony; and on the other a lance, bearing the bloody head of him who was his nearest counsellor or assistant in this base injury. And say, that such our behests being punctually discharged, we will, for the sake of our vow and the weal of the Holy Land, forgive his other forfeits.'

'And how if the Duke of Austria deny all accession to this act of wrong and of felony?' said Thomas de Vaux.

'Tell him,' replied the King, 'we will prove it upon his body -- ay, were he backed with his two bravest champions. Knight-like will we prove it, on foot or on horse, in the desert or in the field -- time, place, and arms all at his own choice.'

'Bethink you of the peace of God and the church, my liege

lord,' said the Baron of Gilsland, 'among those princes engaged in this holy Crusade.'

'Bethink you how to execute my commands, my liege vassal,' answered Richard, impatiently. 'Methinks men expect to turn our purpose by their breath, as boys blow feathers to and fro. Peace of the church! who, I prithee, minds it? The peace of the church, among Crusaders, implies war with the Saracens, with whom the princes have made truce, and the one ends with the other. And, besides, see you not how every prince of them is seeking his own several ends? I will seek mine also, and that is honour. For honour I came hither, and if I may not win it upon the Saracens, at least I will not lose a jot from any respect to this paltry duke, though he were bulwarked and buttressed by every prince in the Crusade.'

De Vaux turned to obey the King's mandate, shrugging his shoulders at the same time, the bluntness of his nature being unable to conceal that its tenor went against his judgment. But the hermit of Engaddi stepped forward, and assumed the air of one charged with higher commands than those of a mere earthly potentate. Indeed, his dress of shaggy skins, his uncombed and untrimmed hair and beard, his lean, wild, and contorted features, and the almost insane fire which gleamed from under his bushy eyebrows, made him approach nearly to our idea of some seer of Scripture, who, charged with high mission to the sinful kings of Judah or Israel, descended from the rocks and caverns in which he dwelt in abstracted solitude, to abash earthly tyrants in the midst of their pride, by discharging on them the blighting denunciations of Divine Majesty, even as the cloud discharges the lightnings with which it is fraught on the pinnacles and towers of castles and palaces.

In the midst of his most wayward mood, Richard respected the church and its ministers, and though offended at the intrusion of the hermit into his tent, he greeted him with respect; at the same time, however, making a sign to Sir Thomas de Vaux to hasten on his message.

But the hermit prohibited the baron, by gesture, look, and word, to stir a yard on such an errand; and, holding up his bare arm, from which the goat-skin mantle fell back in the violence of his action, he waved it aloft, meagre with famine, and wealed with the blows of the discipline.

'In the name of God, and of the most holy Father, the vicegerent of the Christian Church upon earth, I prohibit this most profane, bloodthirsty, and brutal defiance betwixt two

Christian princes, whose shoulders are signed with the blessed mark under which they swore brotherhood. Woe to him by whom it is broken! Richard of England, recall the most unhallowed message thou hast given to that baron. Danger and death are nigh thee — the dagger is glancing at thy very throat!’

‘Danger and death are playmates to Richard,’ answered the monarch, proudly; ‘and he hath braved too many swords to fear a dagger.’

‘Danger and death are near,’ replied the seer; and, sinking his voice to a hollow, unearthly tone, he added, ‘And after death the judgment!’

‘Good and holy father,’ said Richard, ‘I reverence thy person and thy sanctity —’

‘Reverence not me,’ interrupted the hermit; ‘reverence sooner the vilest insect that crawls by the shores of the Dead Sea, and feeds upon its accursed slime. But reverence Him whose commands I speak. Reverence Him whose sepulchre you have vowed to rescue. Revere the oath of concord which you have sworn, and break not the silver cord of union and fidelity with which you have bound yourself to your princely confederates.’

‘Good father,’ said the King, ‘you of the church seem to me to presume somewhat, if a layman may say so much, upon the dignity of your holy character. Without challenging your right to take charge of our conscience, methinks you might leave us the charge of our own honour.’

‘Presume!’ repeated the hermit; ‘is it for me to presume, royal Richard, who am but the bell obeying the hand of the sexton — but the senseless and worthless trumpet, carrying the command of him who sounds it? See, on my knees I throw myself before thee, imploring thee to have mercy on Christendom, on England, and on thyself!’

‘Rise — rise,’ said Richard, compelling him to stand up; ‘it beseems not that knees which are so frequently bended to the Deity should press the ground in honour of man. What danger awaits us, reverend father? and when stood the power of England so low, that the noisy bluster of this new-made duke’s displeasure should alarm her or her monarch?’

‘I have looked forth from my mountain turret upon the starry host of heaven, as each in his midnight circuit uttered wisdom to another, and knowledge to the few who can understand their voice. There sits an enemy in thy house of life,

Lord King, malign at once to thy fame and thy prosperity — an emanation of Saturn, menacing thee with instant and bloody peril, and which, but thou yield thy proud will to the rule of thy duty, will presently crush thee, even in thy pride.'

'Away — away, this is heathen science,' said the King. 'Christians practise it not; wise men believe it not. Old man, thou dotest.'

'I dote not, Richard,' answered the hermit; 'I am not so happy. I know my condition, and that some portion of reason is yet permitted me, not for my own use, but that of the church and the advancement of the Cross. I am the blind man who holds a torch to others, though it yields no light to himself. Ask me touching what concerns the weal of Christendom and of this Crusade, and I will speak with thee as the wisest counsellor on whose tongue persuasion ever sat. Speak to me of my own wretched being, and my words shall be those of the maniac outcast which I am.'

'I would not break the bands of unity asunder among the princes of the Crusade,' said Richard, with a mitigated tone and manner; 'but what atonement can they render me for the injustice and insult which I have sustained?'

'Even of that I am prepared and commissioned to speak by the council, which, meeting hastily at the summons of Philip of France, have taken measures for that effect.'

'Strange,' replied Richard, 'that others should treat of what is due to the wounded Majesty of England!'

'They are willing to anticipate your demands, if it be possible,' answered the hermit. 'In a body, they consent that the banner of England be replaced on St. George's Mount, and they lay under ban and condemnation the audacious criminal, or criminals, by whom it was outraged, and will announce a princely reward to any who shall denounce the delinquent's guilt, and give his flesh to the wolves and ravens.'

'And Austria,' said Richard, 'upon whom rest such strong presumptions that he was the author of the deed?'

'To prevent discord in the host,' replied the hermit, 'Austria will clear himself of the suspicion, by submitting to whatsoever ordeal the Patriarch of Jerusalem shall impose.'

'Will he clear himself by the trial by combat?' said King Richard.

'His oath prohibits it,' said the hermit; 'and, moreover, the council of the princes —'

'Will neither authorise battle against the Saracens,' inter-

rupted Richard, 'nor against any one else. But it is enough, father; thou hast shown me the folly of proceeding as I designed in this matter. You shall sooner light your torch in a puddle of rain than bring a spark out of a cold-blooded coward. There is no honour to be gained on Austria, and so let him pass. I will have him perjure himself, however: I will insist on the ordeal. How I shall laugh to hear his clumsy fingers hiss, as he grasps the red-hot globe of iron! Ay, or his huge mouth riven, and his gullet swelling to suffocation, as he endeavours to swallow the consecrated bread!'

'Peace, Richard,' said the hermit—'oh, peace, for shame if not for charity! Who shall praise or honour princes who insult and calumniate each other? Alas! that a creature so noble as thou art, so accomplished in princely thoughts and princely daring, so fitted to honour Christendom by thy actions, and, in thy calmer mood, to rule her by thy wisdom, should yet have the brute and wild fury of the lion mingled with the dignity and courage of that king of the forest!'

He remained an instant musing with his eyes fixed on the ground, and then proceeded—'But Heaven, that knows our imperfect nature, accepts of our imperfect obedience, and hath delayed, though not averted, the bloody end of thy daring life. The destroying angel hath stood still, as of old by the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, and the blade is drawn in his hand, by which, at no distant date, Richard the lion-hearted shall be as low as the meanest peasant.'

'Must it then be so soon?' said Richard. 'Yet, even so be it. May my course be bright, if it be but brief!'

'Alas! noble King,' said the solitary, and it seemed as if a tear (unwonted guest) were gathering in his dry and glazed eye, 'short and melancholy, marked with mortification, and calamity, and captivity, is the span that divides thee from the grave which yawns for thee—a grave in which thou shalt be laid without lineage to succeed thee, without the tears of a people, exhausted by thy ceaseless wars, to lament thee, without having extended the knowledge of thy subjects, without having done aught to enlarge their happiness.'

'But not without renown, monk—not without the tears of the lady of my love. These consolations, which thou canst neither know nor estimate, await upon Richard to his grave.'

'Do I not know—*can* I not estimate, the value of minstrel's praise and of lady's love?' retorted the hermit, in a tone which for a moment seemed to emulate the enthusiasm of Richard



himself. 'King of England,' he continued, extending his emaciated arm, 'the blood which boils in thy blue veins is not more noble than that which stagnates in mine. Few and cold as the drops are, they still are of the blood of the royal Lusignan — of the heroic and sainted Godfrey. I am — that is, I was when in the world — Alberick Mortemar ——'

'Whose deeds,' said Richard, 'have so often filled Fame's trumpet! Is it so — can it be so? Could such a light as thine fall from the horizon of chivalry, and yet men be uncertain where its embers had alighted?'

'Seek a fallen star,' said the hermit, 'and thou shalt only light on some foul jelly, which, in shooting through the horizon, has assumed for a moment an appearance of splendour. Richard, if I thought that rending the bloody veil from my horrible fate could make thy proud heart stoop to the discipline of the church, I could find in my heart to tell thee a tale which I have hitherto kept gnawing at my vitals in concealment, like the self-devoted youth of Heathenesse. Listen, then, Richard, and may the grief and despair which cannot avail this wretched remnant of what was once a man be powerful as an example to so noble, yet so wild, a being as thou art! Yes, I will — I *will* tear open the long-hidden wounds, although in thy very presence they should bleed to death!'

King Richard, upon whom the history of Alberick of Mortemar had made a deep impression in his early years, when minstrels were regaling his father's halls with legends of the Holy Land, listened with respect to the outlines of a tale which, darkly and imperfectly sketched, indicated sufficiently the cause of the partial insanity of this singular and most unhappy being.

'I need not,' he said, 'tell thee that I was noble in birth, high in fortune, strong in arms, wise in counsel. All these I was; but while the noblest ladies in Palestine strove which should wind garlands for my helmet, my love was fixed — analterably and devotedly fixed — on a maiden of low degree. Her father, an ancient soldier of the Cross, saw our passion, and knowing the difference betwixt us, saw no other refuge for his daughter's honour than to place her within the shadow of the cloister. I returned from a distant expedition, loaded with spoils and honour, to find my happiness was destroyed for ever. I, too, sought the cloister, and Satan, who had marked me for his own, breathed into my heart a vapour of spiritual pride, which could only have had its source in his own infernal regions.

I had risen as high in the church as before in the state : I was, forsooth, the wise, the self-sufficient, the impeccable ! I was the counsellor of councils — I was the director of prelates — how should I stumble — wherefore should I fear temptation ? Alas ! I became confessor to a sisterhood, and amongst that sisterhood I found the long-loved — the long-lost. Spare me farther confession ! A fallen nun, whose guilt was avenged by self-murder, sleeps soundly in the vaults of Engaddi, while, above her very grave, gibbers, moans, and roars a creature to whom but so much reason is left as may suffice to render him completely sensible to his fate !’

‘Unhappy man !’ said Richard, ‘I wonder no longer at thy misery. How didst thou escape the doom which the canons denounce against thy offence ?’

‘Ask one who is yet in the gall of worldly bitterness,’ said the hermit, ‘and he will speak of a life spared for personal respects, and from consideration to high birth. But, Richard, *I* tell thee that Providence hath preserved me, to lift me on high as a light and beacon, whose ashes, when this earthly fuel is burnt out, must yet be flung into Tophet. Withered and shrunk as this poor form is, it is yet animated with two spirits — one active, shrewd and piercing, to advocate the cause of the Church of Jerusalem ; one mean, abject, and despairing, fluctuating between madness and misery, to mourn over my own wretchedness, and to guard holy relics, on which it would be most sinful for me even to cast my eye. Pity me not ! it is but sin to pity the loss of such an abject — pity me not, but profit by my example. Thou standest on the highest, and, therefore, on the most dangerous, pinnacle occupied by any Christian prince. Thou art proud of heart, loose of life, bloody of hand. Put from thee the sins which are to thee as daughters : though they be dear to the sinful Adam, expel these adopted furies from thy breast — thy pride, thy luxury, thy blood-thirstiness !’

‘He raves,’ said Richard, turning from the solitary to De Vaux, as one who felt some pain from a sarcasm which yet he could not resent ; then turned him calmly, and somewhat scornfully, to the anchorite, as he replied — ‘Thou hast found a fair bevy of daughters, reverend father, to one who hath been but few months married ; but since I must put them from my roof, it were but like a father to provide them with suitable matches. Wherefore I will part with my pride to the noble canons of the church, my luxury, as thou call’st it, to the

monks of the rule, and my blood-thirstiness to the Knights of the Temple.'

'O, heart of steel and hand of iron,' said the anchorite, 'upon whom example, as well as advice, is alike thrown away! Yet shalt thou be spared for a season, in case it so be thou shouldst turn and do that which is acceptable in the sight of Heaven. For me, I must return to my place. *Kyrie eleison!* I am he through whom the rays of Heavenly grace dart like those of the sun through a burning glass, concentrating them on other objects until they kindle and blaze, while the glass itself remains cold and uninfluenced. *Kyrie eleison!* The poor must be called, for the rich have refused the banquet. *Kyrie eleison!*' So saying, he burst from the tent, uttering loud cries.

'A mad priest!' said Richard, from whose mind the frantic exclamations of the hermit had partly obliterated the impression produced by the detail of his personal history and misfortunes. 'After him, De Vaux, and see he comes to no harm; for, Crusaders as we are, a juggler hath more reverence amongst our varlets than a priest or a saint, and they may, perchance, put some scorn upon him.'

The knight obeyed, and Richard presently gave way to the thoughts which the wild prophecy of the monk had inspired. 'To die early — without lineage — without lamentation! a heavy sentence, and well that it is not passed by a more competent judge. Yet the Saracens, who are accomplished in mystical knowledge, will often maintain that He in whose eyes the wisdom of the sage is but as folly inspires wisdom and prophecy into the seeming folly of the madman. Yonder hermit is said to read the stars too, an art generally practised in these lands, where the heavenly host was of yore the object of idolatry. I would I had asked him touching the loss of my banner; for not the blessed Tishbite, the founder of his order, could seem more wildly rapt out of himself, or speak with a tongue more resembling that of a prophet. How now, De Vaux, what news of the mad priest?'

'Mad priest, call you him, my lord?' answered De Vaux. 'Methinks he resembles more the blessed Baptist himself, just issued from the wilderness. He has placed himself on one of the military engines, and from thence he preaches to the soldiers, as never man preached since the time of Peter the Hermit. The camp, alarmed by his cries, crowd around him in thousands; and breaking off every now and then from the main thread of his discourse, he addresses the several nations, each in their

own language, and presses upon each the arguments best qualified to urge them to perseverance in the delivery of Palestine.'

'By this light, a noble hermit!' said King Richard. 'But what else could come from the blood of Godfrey? *He* despair of safety, because he hath in former days lived *par amours*? I will have the Pope send him an ample remission, and I would not less willingly be intercessor had his *belle amie* been an abbess.'

As he spoke, the Archbishop of Tyre craved audience, for the purpose of requesting Richard's attendance, should his health permit, on a secret conclave of the chiefs of the Crusade, and to explain to him the military and political incidents which had occurred during his illness.

## CHAPTER XIX

Must we then sheathe our still victorious sword,  
Turn back our forward step, which ever trode  
O'er foemen's necks the onward path of glory,  
Unclasp the mail, which with a solemn vow,  
In God's own house, we hung upon our shoulders —  
That vow, as unaccomplish'd as the promise  
Which village nurses make to still their children,  
And after think no more of ?

*The Crusade, A Tragedy.*

THE Archbishop of Tyre was an emissary well chosen to communicate to Richard tidings which from another voice the lion-hearted king would not have brooked to hear, without the most unbounded explosions of resentment. Even this sagacious and reverend prelate found difficulty in inducing him to listen to news which destroyed all his hopes of gaining back the Holy Sepulchre by force of arms, and acquiring the renown which the universal all-hail of Christendom was ready to confer upon him, as the Champion of the Cross.

But, by the archbishop's report, it appeared that Saladin was assembling all the force of his hundred tribes, and that the monarchs of Europe, already disgusted from various motives with the expedition, which had proved so hazardous, and was daily growing more so, had resolved to abandon their purpose. In this they were countenanced by the example of Philip of France, who, with many protestations of regard, and assurances that he would first see his brother of England in safety, declared his intention to return to Europe. His great vassal, the Earl of Champagne, had adopted the same resolution ; and it could not excite surprise that Leopold of Austria, affronted as he had been by Richard, was glad to embrace an opportunity of deserting a cause in which his haughty opponent was to be considered as chief. Others announced the same purpose ; so that it was plain that the King of England was to be left, if he chose to remain, supported only by such volunteers as might, under



such depressing circumstances, join themselves to the English army, and by the doubtful aid of Conrade of Montserrat, and the military orders of the Temple and of St. John, who, though they were sworn to wage battle against the Saracens, were at least equally jealous of any European monarch achieving the conquest of Palestine, where, with short-sighted and selfish policy, they proposed to establish independent dominions of their own.

It needed not many arguments to show Richard the truth of his situation ; and, indeed, after his first burst of passion, he sat him calmly down, and, with gloomy looks, head depressed, and arms folded on his bosom, listened to the archbishop's reasoning on the impossibility of his carrying on the Crusade when deserted by his companions. Nay, he forbore interruption, even when the prelate ventured, in measured terms, to hint that Richard's own impetuosity had been one main cause of disgusting the princes with the expedition.

'*Confiteor*,' answered Richard, with a dejected look, and something of a melancholy smile ; 'I confess, reverend father, that I ought on some accounts to sing *culpa mea*. But is it not hard that my frailties of temper should be visited with such a penance — that, for a burst or two of natural passion, I should be doomed to see fade before me ungathered such a rich harvest of glory to God and honour to chivalry ? But it shall *not* fade. By the soul of the Conqueror, I will plant the cross on the towers of Jerusalem, or it shall be planted over Richard's grave !'

'Thou mayst do it,' said the prelate, 'yet not another drop of Christian blood be shed in the quarrel.'

'Ah, you speak of compromise, Lord Prelate ; but the blood of the infidel hounds must also cease to flow,' said Richard.

'There will be glory enough,' replied the archbishop, 'in having extorted from Saladin, by force of arms, and by the respect inspired by your fame, such conditions as at once restore the Holy Sepulchre, open the Holy Land to pilgrims, secure their safety by strong fortresses, and, stronger than all, assure the safety of the Holy City, by conferring on Richard the title of King Guardian of Jerusalem.'

'How !' said Richard, his eyes sparkling with unusual light. 'I—I—I the King Guardian of the Holy City ! Victory itself, but that it *is* victory, could not gain more, scarce so much, when won with unwilling and disunited forces. But Saladin still proposes to retain his interest in the Holy Land ?'

‘As a joint sovereign, the sworn ally,’ replied the prelate, ‘of the mighty Richard — his relative, if it may be permitted, by marriage.’

‘By marriage!’ said Richard, surprised, yet less so than the prelate had expected. ‘Ha! Ay — Edith Plantagenet! Did I dream this or did some one tell me? My head is still weak from this fever, and has been agitated. Was it the Scot, or the Hakim, or yonder holy hermit that hinted such a wild bargain?’

‘The hermit of Engaddi, most likely,’ said the archbishop, ‘for he hath toiled much in this matter; and since the discontent of the princes has become apparent, and a separation of their forces unavoidable, he hath had many consultations, both with Christian and Pagan, for arranging such a pacification as may give to Christendom, at least in part, the objects of this holy warfare.’

‘My kinswoman to an infidel — ha!’ exclaimed Richard, as his eyes began to sparkle.

The prelate hastened to avert his wrath. ‘The Pope’s consent must doubtless be first attained, and the holy hermit, who is well known at Rome, will treat with the holy Father.’

‘How! without our consent first given?’ said the King.

‘Surely no,’ said the bishop, in a quieting and insinuating tone of voice; ‘only with and under your especial sanction.’

‘My sanction to marry my kinswoman to an infidel!’ said Richard; yet he spoke rather in a tone of doubt than as distinctly reprobating the measure proposed. ‘Could I have dreamed of such a composition when I leaped upon the Syrian shore from the prow of my galley, even as a lion springs on his prey; and now — ? But proceed, I will hear with patience.’

Equally delighted and surprised to find his task so much easier than he had apprehended, the archbishop hastened to pour forth before Richard the instances of such alliances in Spain, not without countenance from the Holy See, the incalculable advantages which all Christendom would derive from the union of Richard and Saladin by a bond so sacred; and, above all, he spoke with great vehemence and unction on the probability that Saladin would, in case of the proposed alliance, exchange his false faith for the true one.

Hath the Soldan shown any disposition to become Christian?’ said Richard; ‘if so, the king lives not on earth to whom I would grant the hand of a kinswoman — ay, or sister — sooner than to my noble Saladin — ay, though the one came to lay

crown and sceptre at her feet, and the other had nothing to offer but his good sword and better heart.'

'Saladin hath heard our Christian teachers,' said the bishop, somewhat evasively — 'my unworthy self, and others, and as he listens with patience, and replies with calmness, it can hardly be but that he be snatched as a brand from the burning. *Magna est veritas, et prevalebit.* Moreover, the hermit of Eugaddi, few of whose words have fallen fruitless to the ground, is possessed fully with the belief that there is a calling of the Saracens and the other heathen approaching, to which this marriage shall be matter of induction. He readeth the course of the stars; and dwelling, with maceration of the flesh, in those divine places which the saints have trodden of old, the spirit of Elijah the Tishbite, the founder of his blessed order, hath been with him as it was with the prophet Elisha, the son of Shaphat, when he spread his mantle over him.'

King Richard listened to the prelate's reasoning with a downcast brow and a troubled look.

'I cannot tell,' he said, 'how it is with me; but methinks these cold counsels of the princes of Christendom have infected me too with a lethargy of spirit. The time hath been that, had a layman proposed such alliance to me, I had struck him to earth; if a churchman, I had spit at him as a renegade and priest of Baal; yet now this counsel sounds not so strange in mine ear. For why should I not seek for brotherhood and alliance with a Saracen, brave, just, generous, who loves and honours a worthy foe as if he were a friend; whilst the princes of Christendom shrink from the side of their allies, and forsake the cause of Heaven and good knighthood? But I will possess my patience, and will not think of them. Only one attempt will I make to keep this gallant brotherhood together, if it be possible; and if I fail, Lord Archbishop, we will speak together of thy counsel, which, as now, I neither accept nor altogether reject. Wend we to the council, my lord — the hour calls us. Thou say'st Richard is hasty and proud; thou shalt see him humble himself like the lowly broom-plant from which he derives his surname.'

With the assistance of those of his privy-chamber, the King then hastily robed himself in a doublet and mantle of a dark and uniform colour; and without any mark of regal dignity, excepting a ring of gold upon his head, he hastened with the Archbishop of Tyre to attend the council, which waited but his presence to commence its sitting.

The pavilion of the council was an ample tent, having before it the large banner of the Cross displayed, and another, on which was portrayed a female kneeling, with dishevelled hair and disordered dress, meant to represent the desolate and distressed Church of Jerusalem, and bearing the motto, *Afflicte sponsæ ne obliviscaris*. Warders, carefully selected, kept every one at a distance from the neighbourhood of this tent, lest the debates, which were sometimes of a loud and stormy character, should reach other ears than those they were designed for.

Here, therefore, the princes of the Crusade were assembled, awaiting Richard's arrival; and even the brief delay which was thus interposed was turned to his disadvantage by his enemies; various instances being circulated of his pride and undue assumption of superiority, of which even the necessity of the present short pause was quoted as an instance. Men strove to fortify each other in their evil opinion of the King of England, and vindicated the offence which each had taken, by putting the most severe construction upon circumstances the most trifling; and all this, perhaps, because they were conscious of an instinctive reverence for the heroic monarch, which it would require more than ordinary efforts to overcome.

They had settled, accordingly, that they should receive him on his entrance with slight notice, and no more respect than was exactly necessary to keep within the bounds of cold ceremonial. But when they beheld that noble form, that princely countenance, somewhat pale from his late illness, the eye which had been called by minstrels the bright star of battle and victory — when his feats, almost surpassing human strength and valour, rushed on their recollection, the council of princes simultaneously arose — even the jealous King of France, and the sullen and offended Duke of Austria, arose with one consent, and the assembled princes burst forth with one voice in the acclamation, 'God save King Richard of England! Long life to the valiant Lion's-heart!'

With a countenance frank and open as the summer sun when it rises, Richard distributed his thanks around, and congratulated himself on being once more among his royal brethren of the Crusades.

'Some brief words he desired to say,' such was his address to the assembly, 'though on a subject so unworthy as himself, even at the risk of delaying for a few minutes their consultations for the weal of Christendom and the advancement of their holy enterprise.'

The assembled princes resumed their seats, and there was a profound silence.

‘This day,’ continued the King of England, ‘is a high festival of the church ; and well becomes it Christian men, at such a tide, to reconcile themselves with their brethren, and confess their faults to each other. Noble princes, and fathers of this holy expedition, Richard is a soldier : his hand is ever readier than his tongue, and his tongue is but too much used to the rough language of his trade. But do not, for Plantagenet’s hasty speeches and ill-considered actions, forsake the noble cause of the redemption of Palestine : do not throw away earthly renown and eternal salvation, to be won here if ever they can be won by man, because the act of a soldier may have been hasty, and his speech as hard as the iron which he has worn from childhood. Is Richard in default to any of you, Richard will make compensation both by word and action. Noble brother of France, have I been so unlucky as to offend you ?’

‘The Majesty of France has no atonement to seek from that of England,’ answered Philip, with kingly dignity, accepting, at the same time, the offered hand of Richard ; ‘and whatever opinion I may adopt concerning the prosecution of this enterprise will depend on reasons arising out of the state of my own kingdom, certainly on no jealousy or disgust at my royal and most valorous brother.’

‘Austria,’ said Richard, walking up to the Archduke with a mixture of frankness and dignity, while Leopold arose from his seat, as if involuntarily, and with the action of an automaton, whose motions depended upon some external impulse — ‘Austria thinks he hath reason to be offended with England ; England, that he hath cause to complain of Austria. Let them exchange forgiveness, that the peace of Europe, and the concord of this host, may remain unbroken. We are now joint-supporters of a more glorious banner than ever blazed before an earthly prince, even the Banner of Salvation ; let not, therefore, strife be betwixt us for the symbol of our more worldly dignities ; but let Leopold restore the pennon of England, if he has it in his power, and Richard will say, though from no motive save his love for Holy Church, that he repents him of the hasty mood in which he did insult the standard of Austria.’

The Archduke stood still, sullen and discontented, with his eyes fixed on the floor, and his countenance lowering with smothered displeasure, which awe, mingled with awkwardness, prevented his giving vent to in words.



The Patriarch of Jerusalem hastened to break the embarrassing silence, and to bear witness for the Archduke of Austria, that he had exculpated himself, by a solemn oath, from all knowledge, direct or indirect, of the aggression done to the banner of England.

‘Then we have done the noble Archduke the greater wrong,’ said Richard; ‘and craving his pardon for imputing to him an outrage so cowardly, we extend our hand to him in token of renewed peace and amity. But how is this? Austria refuses our uncovered hand, as he formerly refused our mailed glove? What! are we neither to be his mate in peace nor his antagonist in war? Well, let it be so. We will take the slight esteem in which he holds us as a penance for aught which we may have done against him in heat of blood, and will therefore hold the account between us cleared.’

So saying, he turned from the Archduke with an air rather of dignity than scorn, leaving the Austrian apparently as much relieved by the removal of his eye as is a sullen and truant schoolboy when the glance of his severe pedagogue is withdrawn.

‘Noble Earl of Champagne — princely Marquis of Montserrat — valiant Grand Master of the Templars, I am here a penitent in the confessional. Do any of you bring a charge, or claim amends from me?’

‘I know not on what we could ground any,’ said the smooth-tongued Conrade, ‘unless it were that the King of England carries off from his poor brothers of the war all the fame which they might have hoped to gain in the expedition.’

‘My charge, if I am called on to make one,’ said the Master of the Templars, ‘is graver and deeper than that of the Marquis of Montserrat. It may be thought ill to beseem a military monk such as I to raise his voice where so many noble princes remain silent; but it concerns our whole host, and not least this noble King of England, that he should hear from some one to his face those charges which there are enough to bring against him in his absence. We laud and honour the courage and high achievements of the King of England, but we feel aggrieved that he should, on all occasions, seize and maintain a precedence and superiority over us which it becomes not independent princes to submit to. Much we might yield of our free will to his bravery, his zeal, his wealth, and his power; but he who snatches all, as matter of right, and leaves nothing to grant out of courtesy and favour, degrades us from allies

into retainers and vassals, and sullies, in the eyes of our soldiers and subjects, the lustre of our authority, which is no longer independently exercised. Since the royal Richard has asked the truth from us, he must neither be surprised nor angry when he hears one to whom worldly pomp is prohibited, and secular authority is nothing, saving so far as it advances the prosperity of God's temple, and the prostration of the lion which goeth about seeking whom he may devour — when he hears, I say, such a one as I tell him the truth in reply to his question, which truth, even while I speak it, is, I know, confirmed by the heart of every one who hears me, however respect may stifle their voices.'

Richard coloured very highly while the Grand Master was making this direct and unvarnished attack upon his conduct, and the murmur of assent which followed it showed plainly that almost all who were present acquiesced in the justice of the accusation. Incensed, and at the same time mortified, he yet foresaw that to give way to his headlong resentment would be to give the cold and wary accuser the advantage over him which it was the Templar's principal object to obtain. He, therefore, with a strong effort, remained silent till he had repeated a paternoster, being the course which his confessor had enjoined him to pursue, when anger was likely to obtain dominion over him. The King then spoke with composure, though not without an embittered tone, especially at the outset.

'And is it even so? And are our brethren at such pains to note the infirmities of our natural temper, and the rough precipitance of our zeal, which may sometimes have urged us to issue commands when there was little time to hold counsel? I could not have thought that offences casual and unpremeditated like mine could find such deep root in the hearts of my allies in this most holy cause, that for my sake they should withdraw their hand from the plough when the furrow was near the end, for my sake turn aside from the direct path to Jerusalem which their swords have opened. I vainly thought that my small services might have outweighed my rash errors; that, if it were remembered that I pressed to the van in an assault, it would not be forgotten that I was ever the last in the retreat; that, if I elevated my banner upon conquered fields of battle, it was all the advantage that I sought, while others were dividing the spoil. I may have called the conquered city by my name, but it was to others that I yielded

the dominion. If I have been headstrong in urging bold counsels, I have not, methinks, spared my own blood or my people's in carrying them into as bold execution; or if I have, in the hurry of march or battle, assumed a command over the soldiers of others, such have been ever treated as my own, when my wealth purchased the provisions and medicines which their own sovereigns could not procure. But it shames me to remind you of what all but myself seem to have forgotten. Let us rather look forward to our future measures; and believe me, brethren,' he continued, his face kindling with eagerness, 'you shall not find the pride, or the wrath, or the ambition of Richard a stumbling-block of offence in the path to which religion and glory summon you, as with the trumpet of an archangel. Oh no — no! never would I survive the thought that my frailties and infirmities had been the means to sever this goodly fellowship of assembled princes. I would cut off my left hand with my right could my doing so attest my sincerity. I will yield up, voluntarily, all right to command in the host, even mine own liege subjects. They shall be led by such sovereigns as you may nominate, and their king, ever but too apt to exchange the leader's baton for the adventurer's lance, will serve under the banner of Beau-Seant among the Templars — ay, or under that of Austria, if Austria will name a brave man to lead his forces. Or, if ye are yourselves a-weary of this war, and feel your armour chafe your tender bodies, leave but with Richard some ten or fifteen thousand of your soldiers to work out the accomplishment of your vow; and when Zion is won,' he exclaimed, waving his hand aloft, as if displaying the standard of the Cross over Jerusalem — 'when Zion is won, we will write upon her gates, NOT the name of Richard Plantagenet, but of those generous princes who entrusted him with the means of conquest.'

The rough eloquence and determined expression of the military monarch at once roused the drooping spirits of the Crusaders, reanimated their devotion, and, fixing their attention on the principal object of the expedition, made most of them who were present blush for having been moved by such petty subjects of complaint as had before engrossed them. Eye caught fire from eye, voice lent courage to voice. They resumed, as with one accord, the war-cry with which the sermon of Peter the Hermit was echoed back, and shouted aloud, 'Lead us on, gallant Lion's-heart, none so worthy to lead where brave men follow. Lead us on — to Jerusalem — to Jerusalem !

It is the will of God — it is the will of God ! Blessed is he who shall lend an arm to its fulfilment !’

The shout, so suddenly and generally raised, was heard beyond the ring of sentinels who guarded the pavilion of council, and spread among the soldiers of the host, who, inactive and dispirited by disease and climate, had begun, like their leaders, to droop in resolution ; but the reappearance of Richard in renewed vigour, and the well-known shout which echoed from the assembly of the princes, at once rekindled their enthusiasm, and thousands and tens of thousands answered with the same shout of ‘Zion — Zion ! War — war ! — instant battle with the infidels ! It is the will of God — it is the will of God !’

The acclamations from without increased in their turn the enthusiasm which prevailed within the pavilion. Those who did not actually catch the flame were afraid, at least for the time, to seem colder than others. There was no more speech except of a proud advance towards Jerusalem upon the expiry of the truce, and the measures to be taken in the meantime for supplying and recruiting the army. The council broke up, all apparently filled with the same enthusiastic purpose, which, however, soon faded in the bosom of most, and never had an existence in that of others.

Of the latter class were the Marquis Conrade and the Grand Master of the Templars, who retired together to their quarters ill at ease, and malcontent with the events of the day.

‘I ever told it to thee,’ said the latter, with the cold, sardonic expression peculiar to him, ‘that Richard would burst through the flimsy wiles you spread for him, as would a lion through a spider’s web. Thou seest he has but to speak, and his breath agitates these fickle fools as easily as the whirlwind catcheth scattered straws and sweeps them together or disperses them at its pleasure.’

‘When the blast has passed away,’ said Conrade, ‘the straws, which it made dance to its pipe, will settle to earth again.’

‘But know’st thou not besides,’ said the Templar, ‘that it seems, if this new purpose of conquest shall be abandoned and pass away, and each mighty prince shall again be left to such guidance as his own scanty brain can supply, Richard may yet probably become King of Jerusalem by compact, and establish those terms of treaty with the Soldan which thou thyself thought’st him so likely to spurn at?’

'Now, by Mahound and Termagaunt, for Christian oaths are out of fashion,' said Conrade, 'say'st thou the proud King of England would unite his blood with a heathen Soldan? My policy threw in that ingredient to make the whole treaty an abomination to him. As bad for us that he become our master by an agreement as by victory.'

'Thy policy hath ill calculated Richard's digestion,' answered the Templar; 'I know his mind by a whisper from the archbishop. And then thy master-stroke respecting yonder banner—it has passed off with no more respect than two cubits of embroidered silk merited. Marquis Conrade, thy wit begins to halt; I will trust thy fine-spun measures no longer, but will try my own. Know'st thou not the people whom the Saracens call Charegites?'

'Surely,' answered the Marquis; 'they are desperate and besotted enthusiasts, who devote their lives to the advancement of religion; somewhat like Templars, only they are never known to pause in the race of their calling.'

'Jest not,' answered the scowling monk; 'know, that one of these men has set down in his bloody vow the name of the island emperor yonder, to be hewn down as the chief enemy of the Moslem faith.'

'A most judicious paynim,' said Conrade. 'May Mahomet send him his paradise for a reward!'

'He was taken in the camp by one of our squires, and, in private examination, frankly avowed his fixed and determined purpose to me,' said the Grand Master.

'Now the Heavens pardon them who prevented the purpose of this most judicious Charegite!' answered Conrade.

'He is my prisoner,' added the Templar, 'and secluded from speech with others, as thou mayst suppose; but prisons have been broken——'

'Chains left unlocked, and captives have escaped,' answered the Marquis. 'It is an ancient saying, "No sure dungeon but the grave."'

'When loose he resumes his quest,' continued the military priest, 'for it is the nature of this sort of bloodhound never to quit the slot of the prey he has once scented.'

'Say no more of it,' said the Marquis; 'I see thy policy—it is dreadful, but the emergency is imminent.'

'I only told thee of it,' said the Templar, 'that thou mayst keep thyself on thy guard, for the uproar will be dreadful, and there is no knowing on whom the English may vent their



rage. Ay, and there is another risk : my page knows the counsels of this Charegite,' he continued ; 'and, moreover, he is a peevish, self-willed fool, whom I would I were rid of, as he thwarts me by presuming to see with his own eyes, not mine. But our holy Order gives me power to put a remedy to such inconvenience. Or stay — the Saracen may find a good dagger in his cell, and I warrant you he uses it as he breaks forth, which will be of a surety so soon as the page enters with his food.'

'It will give the affair a colour,' said Conrade ; 'and yet ——'

'“ Yet ” and “ but, ”' said the Templar, 'are words for fools : wise men neither hesitate nor retract : they resolve and they execute.'

## CHAPTER XX

When beauty leads the lion in her toils,  
Such are her charms, he dare not raise his mane,  
Far less expand the terror of his fangs.  
So great Alcides made his club a distaff,  
And spun to please fair Omphalé.

*Anonymous.*

RICHARD, the unsuspecting object of the dark treachery detailed in the closing part of the last chapter, having effected, for the present at least, the triumphant union of the Crusading princes in a resolution to prosecute the war with vigour, had it next at heart to establish tranquillity in his own family; and, now that he could judge more temperately, to inquire distinctly into the circumstances leading to the loss of his banner, and the nature and the extent of the connexion betwixt his kinswoman Edith and the banished adventurer from Scotland.

Accordingly, the Queen and her household were startled with a visit from Sir Thomas de Vaux, requesting the present attendance of the Lady Calista of Montfaucon, the Queen's principal bower-woman, upon King Richard.

'What am I to say, madam?' said the trembling attendant to the Queen. 'He will slay us all.'

'Nay, fear not, madam,' said De Vaux. 'His Majesty hath spared the life of the Scottish knight, who was the chief offender, and bestowed him upon the Moorish physician: he will not be severe upon a lady, though faulty.'

'Devise some cunning tale, wench,' said Berengaria. 'My husband hath too little time to make inquiry into the truth.'

'Tell the tale as it really happened,' said Edith, 'lest I tell it for thee.'

'With humble permission of her Majesty,' said De Vaux, 'I would say Lady Edith adviseth well; for although King Richard is pleased to believe what it pleases your Grace to tell him, yet I doubt his having the same deference for the Lady Calista, and in this especial matter.'

'The Lord of Gilsland is right,' said the Lady Calista, much agitated at the thoughts of the investigation which was to take place; 'and, besides, if I had presence of mind enough to forge a plausible story, beshrew me if I think I should have the courage to tell it.'

In this candid humour, the Lady Calista was conducted by De Vaux to the King, and made, as she had proposed, a full confession of the decoy by which the unfortunate Knight of the Leopard had been induced to desert his post; exculpating the Lady Edith, who, she was aware, would not fail to exculpate herself, and laying the full burden on the Queen, her mistress, whose share of the frolic, she well knew, would appear the most venial in the eyes of Cœur-de-Lion. In truth, Richard was a fond, almost an uxorious, husband. The first burst of his wrath had long since passed away, and he was not disposed severely to censure what could not now be amended. The wily Lady Calista, accustomed from her earliest childhood to fathom the intrigues of a court and watch the indications of a sovereign's will, hastened back to the Queen with the speed of a lapwing, charged with the King's commands that she should expect a speedy visit from him; to which the bower-lady added a commentary founded on her own observation, tending to show that Richard meant just to preserve so much severity as might bring his royal consort to repent of her frolic, and then to extend to her and all concerned his gracious pardon.

'Sits the wind in that corner, wench?' said the Queen, much relieved by this intelligence. 'Believe me that, great commander as he is, Richard will find it hard to circumvent us in this matter; and that, as the Pyrenean shepherds are wont to say in my native Navarre, many a one comes for wool and goes back shorn.'

Having possessed herself of all the information which Calista could communicate, the royal Berengaria arrayed herself in her most becoming dress, and awaited with confidence the arrival of the heroic Richard.

He arrived, and found himself in the situation of a prince entering an offending province in the confidence that his business will only be to inflict rebuke and receive submission, when he unexpectedly finds it in a state of complete defiance and insurrection. Berengaria well knew the power of her charms and the extent of Richard's affection, and felt assured that she could make her own terms good, now that the first tremendous explosion of his anger had expended itself without

mischief. Far from listening to the King's intended rebuke, as what the levity of her conduct had justly deserved, she extenuated, nay defended, as a harmless frolic, that which she was accused of. She denied, indeed, with many a pretty form of negation, that she had directed Nectabanus absolutely to entice the knight farther than the brink of the mount on which he kept watch — and indeed this was so far true, that she had not designed Sir Kenneth to be introduced into her tent; and then, eloquent in urging her own defence, the Queen was far more so in pressing upon Richard the charge of unkindness, in refusing her so poor a boon as the life of an unfortunate knight, who, by her thoughtless prank, had been brought within the danger of martial law. She wept and sobbed while she enlarged on her husband's obduracy on this score, as a rigour which had threatened to make her unhappy for life, whenever she should reflect that she had given, unthinkingly, the remote cause for such a tragedy. The vision of the slaughtered victim would have haunted her dreams — nay, for aught she knew, since such things often happened, his actual spectre might have stood by her waking couch. To all this misery of the mind was she exposed by the severity of one who, while he pretended to dote upon her slightest glance, would not forego one act of poor revenge, though the issue was to render her miserable.

All this flow of female eloquence was accompanied with the usual arguments of tears and sighs, and uttered with such tone and action as seemed to show that the Queen's resentment arose neither from pride nor sullenness, but from feelings hurt at finding her consequence with her husband less than she had expected to possess.

The good King Richard was considerably embarrassed. He tried in vain to reason with one whose very jealousy of his affection rendered her incapable of listening to argument, nor could he bring himself to use the restraint of lawful authority to a creature so beautiful in the midst of her unreasonable displeasure. He was, therefore, reduced to the defensive, endeavoured gently to chide her suspicions and soothe her displeasure, and recalled to her mind that she need not look back upon the past with recollections either of remorse or supernatural fear, since Sir Kenneth was alive and well, and had been bestowed by him upon the great Arabian physician, who, doubtless, of all men, knew best how to keep him living. But this seemed the unkindest cut of all, and the Queen's sorrow

was renewed at the idea of a Saracen — a mediciner — obtaining a boon for which, with bare head and on bended knee, she had petitioned her husband in vain. At this new charge, Richard's patience began rather to give way, and he said, in a serious tone of voice, 'Berengaria, the physician saved my life. If it is of value in your eyes, you will not grudge him a higher recompense than the only one I could prevail on him to accept.'

The Queen was satisfied she had urged her coquettish displeasure to the verge of safety.

'My Richard,' she said, 'why brought you not that sage to me, that England's Queen might show how she esteemed him who could save from extinction the lamp of chivalry, the glory of England, and the light of poor Berengaria's life and hope?'

In a word, the matrimonial dispute was ended; but, that some penalty might be paid to justice, both King and Queen accorded in laying the whole blame on the agent Nectabanus, who (the Queen being by this time well weary of the poor dwarf's humour) was, with his royal consort Guenevra, sentenced to be banished from the court; and the unlucky dwarf only escaped a supplementary whipping, from the Queen's assurances that he had already sustained personal chastisement. It was decreed farther that, as an envoy was shortly to be despatched to Saladin, acquainting him with the resolution of the council to resume hostilities so soon as the truce was ended, and as Richard proposed to send a valuable present to the Soldan, in acknowledgment of the high benefit he had derived from the services of El Hakim, the two unhappy creatures should be added to it as curiosities, which, from their extremely grotesque appearance, and the shattered state of their intellect, were gifts that might well pass between sovereign and sovereign.

Richard had that day yet another female encounter to sustain; but he advanced to it with comparative indifference, for Edith, though beautiful, and highly esteemed by her royal relative — nay, although she had from his unjust suspicions actually sustained the injury of which Berengaria only affected to complain — still was neither Richard's wife nor mistress, and he feared her reproaches less, although founded in reason, than those of the Queen, though unjust and fantastical. Having requested to speak with her apart, he was ushered into her apartment, adjoining that of the Queen, whose two female Coptic slaves remained on their knees in the most remote corner during the interview. A thin black veil extended its



ample folds over the tall and graceful form of the high-born maiden, and she wore not upon her person any female ornament of what kind soever. She arose and made a low reverence when Richard entered, resumed her seat at his command, and, when he sat down beside her, waited, without uttering a syllable, until he should communicate his pleasure.

Richard, whose custom it was to be familiar with Edith, as their relationship authorised, felt this reception chilling, and opened the conversation with some embarrassment.

‘Our fair cousin,’ he at length said, ‘is angry with us; and we own that strong circumstances have induced us, without cause, to suspect her of conduct alien to what we have ever known in her course of life. But while we walk in this misty valley of humanity, men will mistake shadows for substances. Can my fair cousin not forgive her somewhat vehement kinsman, Richard?’

‘Who can refuse forgiveness to *Richard*,’ answered Edith, ‘provided Richard can obtain pardon of the *king*?’

‘Come, my kinswoman,’ replied Cœur-de-Lion, ‘this is all too solemn. By Our Lady, such a melancholy countenance, and this ample sable veil, might make men think thou wert a new-made widow, or had lost a betrothed lover, at least. Cheer up; thou hast heard doubtless that there is no real cause for woe, why then keep up the form of mourning?’

‘For the departed honour of Plantagenet — for the glory which hath left my father’s house.’

Richard frowned. ‘Departed honour! glory which hath left our house!’ he repeated, angrily; ‘but my cousin Edith is privileged. I have judged her too hastily, she has therefore a right to deem of me too harshly. But tell me at least in what I have faulted.’

‘Plantagenet,’ said Edith, ‘should have either pardoned an offence or punished it. It misbecomes him to assign free men, Christians, and brave knights to the fetters of the infidels. It becomes him not to compromise and barter, or to grant life under the forfeiture of liberty. To have doomed the unfortunate to death might have been severity, but had a show of justice; to condemn him to slavery and exile was barefaced tyranny.’

‘I see, my fair cousin,’ said Richard, ‘you are of those pretty ones who think an absent lover as bad as none, or as a dead one. Be patient; half a score of light horsemen may yet follow and redeem the error, if thy gallant have in keeping any

secret which might render his death more convenient than his banishment.'

'Peace with thy scurrile jests,' answered Edith, colouring deeply. 'Think rather that, for the indulgence of thy mood, thou hast lopped from this great enterprise one goodly limb, deprived the Cross of one of its most brave supporters, and placed a servant of the true God in the hands of the heathen; hast given, too, to minds as suspicious as thou hast shown thine own in this matter some right to say that Richard Cœur-de-Lion banished the bravest soldier in his camp, lest his name in battle might match his own.'

'I—I!' exclaimed Richard, now indeed greatly moved — 'am I one to be jealous of renown? I would he were here to profess such an equality! I would waive my rank and my crown, and meet him, manlike, in the lists, that it might appear whether Richard Plantagenet had room to fear or to envy the prowess of mortal man. Come, Edith, thou think'st not as thou say'st. Let not anger or grief for the absence of thy lover make thee unjust to thy kinsman, who, notwithstanding all thy tetchiness, values thy good report as high as that of any one living.'

'The absence of my lover!' said the Lady Edith. 'But yes, he may be well termed my lover who hath paid so dear for the title. Unworthy as I might be of such homage, I was to him like a light, leading him forward in the noble path of chivalry; but that I forgot my rank, or that he presumed beyond his, is false, were a king to speak it.'

'My fair cousin,' said Richard, 'do not put words in my mouth which I have not spoken. I said not you had graced this man beyond the favour which a good knight may earn, even from a princess, whatever be his native condition. But, by Our Lady, I know something of this love-gear: it begins with mute respect and distant reverence, but when opportunities occur, familiarity increases, and so — But it skills not talking with one who thinks herself wiser than all the world.'

'My kinsman's counsels I willingly listen to when they are such,' said Edith, 'as convey no insult to my rank and character.'

'Kings, my fair cousin, do not counsel, but rather command,' said Richard.

'Soldans do indeed command,' said Edith, 'but it is because they have slaves to govern.'

'Come, you might learn to lay aside this scorn of Soldanrie, when you hold so high of a Scot,' said the King. 'I hold

Saladin to be truer to his word than this William of Scotland, who must needs be called a Lion forsooth : he hath foully faulted towards me, in failing to send the auxiliary aid he promised. Let me tell thee, Edith, thou mayst live to prefer a true Turk to a false Scot.'

'No — never !' answered Edith, 'not should Richard himself embrace the false religion, which he crossed the seas to expel from Palestine.'

'Thou wilt have the last word,' said Richard, 'and thou shalt have it. Even think of me what thou wilt, pretty Edith. I shall not forget that we are near and dear cousins.'

So saying, he took his leave in fair fashion, but very little satisfied with the result of his visit.

It was the fourth day after Sir Kenneth had been dismissed from the camp ; and King Richard sat in his pavilion, enjoying an evening breeze from the west, which, with unusual coolness on her wings, seemed breathed from Merry England for the refreshment of her adventurous monarch, as he was gradually recovering the full strength which was necessary to carry on his gigantic projects. There was no one with him, De Vaux having been sent to Ascalon to bring up reinforcements and supplies of military munition, and most of his other attendants being occupied in different departments, all preparing for the re-opening of hostilities, and for a grand preparatory review of the army of the Crusaders, which was to take place the next day. The King sat listening to the busy hum among the soldiery, the clatter from the forges, where horseshoes were preparing, and from the tents of the armourers, who were repairing harness ; the voice of the soldiers too, as they passed and repassed, was loud and cheerful, carrying with its very tone an assurance of high and excited courage, and an omen of approaching victory. While Richard's ear drank in these sounds with delight, and while he yielded himself to the visions of conquest and of glory which they suggested, an equerry told him that a messenger from Saladin waited without.

'Admit him instantly,' said the King, 'and with due honour, Josceline.'

The English knight accordingly introduced a person, apparently of no higher rank than a Nubian slave, whose appearance was nevertheless highly interesting. He was of superb stature and nobly formed, and his commanding features, although almost jet-black, showed nothing of negro descent. He wore

over his coal-black locks a milk-white turban, and over his shoulders a short mantle of the same colour, open in front and at the sleeves, under which appeared a doublet of dressed leopard's skin reaching within a handbreadth of the knee. The rest of his muscular limbs, both legs and arms, were bare, excepting that he had sandals on his feet, and wore a collar and bracelets of silver. A straight broadsword, with a handle of boxwood, and a sheath covered with snake-skin, was suspended from his waist. In his right hand he held a short javelin, with a broad, bright, steel head, of a span in length, and in his left he led, by a leash of twisted silk and gold, a large and noble staghound.

The messenger prostrated himself, at the same time partially uncovering his shoulders, in sign of humiliation, and having touched the earth with his forehead, arose so far as to rest on one knee, while he delivered to the King a silken napkin, inclosing another of cloth of gold, within which was a letter from Saladin in the original Arabic, with a translation into Norman-English, which may be modernised thus :

‘Saladin, King of Kings, to Melech Ric, the Lion of England. Whereas, we are informed by thy last message that thou hast chosen war rather than peace, and our enmity rather than our friendship, we account thee as one blinded in this matter, and trust shortly to convince thee of thine error, by the help of our invincible forces of the thousand tribes, when Mohammed, the Prophet of God, and Allah, the God of the Prophet, shall judge the controversy betwixt us. In what remains, we make noble account of thee, and of the gifts which thou hast sent us, and of the two dwarfs, singular in their deformity as Ysop, and mirthful as the lute of Isaack. And in requital of these tokens from the treasure-house of thy bounty, behold we have sent thee a Nubian slave, named Zohauk, of whom judge not by his complexion, according to the foolish ones of the earth, in respect the dark-rinded fruit hath the most exquisite flavour. Know that he is strong to execute the will of his master, as Rustan of Zablestan ; also he is wise to give counsel when thou shalt learn to hold communication with him, for the lord of speech hath been stricken with silence betwixt the ivory walls of his palace. We commend him to thy care, hoping the hour may not be distant when he may render thee good service. And herewith we bid thee farewell ; trusting that our most holy Prophet may yet call thee to a sight of the truth, failing

which illumination, our desire is, for the speedy restoration of thy royal health, that Allah may judge between thee and us in a plain field of battle.'

And the missive was sanctioned by the signature and seal of the Soldan.

Richard surveyed the Nubian in silence as he stood before him, his looks bent upon the ground, his arms folded on his bosom, with the appearance of a black marble statue of the most exquisite workmanship, waiting life from the touch of a Prometheus. The King of England, who, as it was emphatically said of his successor Henry the Eighth, loved to look upon A MAN, was well pleased with the thewes, sinews, and symmetry of him whom he now surveyed, and questioned him in the *lingua franca*, 'Art thou a pagan?'

The slave shook his head, and raising his finger to his brow, crossed himself in token of his Christianity, then resumed his posture of motionless humility.

'A Nubian Christian, doubtless,' said Richard, 'and mutilated of the organ of speech by these heathen dogs?'

The mute again slowly shook his head, in token of negative, pointed with his forefinger to Heaven, and then laid it upon his own lips.

'I understand thee,' said Richard; 'thou dost suffer under the infliction of God, not by the cruelty of man. Canst thou clean an armour and belt, and buckle it in time of need?'

The mute nodded, and stepping towards the coat of mail, which hung, with the shield and helmet of the chivalrous monarch, upon the pillar of the tent, he handled it with such nicety of address as sufficiently to show that he fully understood the business of the armour-bearer.

'Thou art an apt, and wilt doubtless be a useful, knave; thou shalt wait in my chamber, and on my person,' said the King, 'to show how much I value the gift of the royal Soldan. If thou hast no tongue, it follows thou canst carry no tales, neither provoke me to be sudden by any unfit reply.'

The Nubian again prostrated himself till his brow touched the earth, then stood erect, at some paces distant, as waiting for his new master's commands.

'Nay, thou shalt commence thy office presently,' said Richard, 'for I see a speck of rust darkening on that shield; and when I shake it in the face of Saladin, it should be bright and unsullied as the Soldan's honour and mine own.'



A horn was winded without, and presently Sir Henry Neville entered with a packet of despatches. 'From England, my lord,' he said, as he delivered it.

'From England — our own England!' repeated Richard, in a tone of melancholy enthusiasm. 'Alas! they little think how hard their sovereign has been beset by sickness and sorrow, faint friends and forward enemies.' Then opening the despatches, he said hastily, 'Ha! this comes from no peaceful land: they too have their feuds. Neville, begone; I must peruse these tidings alone, and at leisure.'

Neville withdrew accordingly, and Richard was soon absorbed in the melancholy details which had been conveyed to him from England, concerning the factions that were tearing to pieces his native dominions: the disunion of his brothers, John and Geoffrey, and the quarrels of both with the High Justiciary Longchamp, Bishop of Ely; the oppressions practised by the nobles upon the peasantry, and rebellion of the latter against their masters, which had produced everywhere scenes of discord, and in some instances the effusion of blood. Details of incidents mortifying to his pride, and derogatory from his authority, were intermingled with the earnest advice of his wisest and most attached counsellors, that he should presently return to England, as his presence offered the only hope of saving the kingdom from all the horrors of civil discord, of which France and Scotland were likely to avail themselves. Filled with the most painful anxiety, Richard read, and again read, the ill-omened letters, compared the intelligence which some of them contained with the same facts as differently stated in others, and soon became totally insensible to whatever was passing around him, although seated, for the sake of coolness, close to the entrance of his tent, and having the curtains withdrawn, so that he could see and be seen by the guards and others who were stationed without.

Deeper in the shadow of the pavilion, and busied with the task his new master had imposed, sat the Nubian slave, with his back rather turned towards the King. He had finished adjusting and cleaning the hauberk and brigandine, and was now busily employed on a broad pavesse, or buckler, of unusual size, and covered with steel-plating, which Richard often used in reconnoitring, or actually storming fortified places, as a more effectual protection against missile weapons than the narrow triangular shield used on horseback. This pavesse bore neither the royal lions of England nor any other device, to attract the

observation of the defenders of the walls against which it was advanced ; the care, therefore, of the armourer was addressed to causing its surface to shine as bright as crystal, in which he seemed to be peculiarly successful. Beyond the Nubian, and scarce visible from without, lay the large dog, which might be termed his brother slave, and which, as if he felt awed by being transferred to a royal owner, was couched close to the side of the mute, with head and ears on the ground, and his limbs and tail drawn close around and under him.

While the monarch and his new attendant were thus occupied, another actor crept upon the scene, and mingled among the group of English yeomen, about a score of whom, respecting the unusually pensive posture and close occupation of their sovereign, were, contrary to their wont, keeping a silent guard in front of his tent. It was not, however, more vigilant than usual. Some were playing at games of hazard with small pebbles, others spoke together in whispers of the approaching day of battle, and several lay asleep, their bulky limbs folded in their green mantles.

Amid these careless warders glided the puny form of a little old Turk, poorly dressed like a marabout or santon of the desert — a sort of enthusiasts, who sometimes ventured into the camp of the Crusaders, though treated always with contumely, and often with violence. Indeed, the luxury and profligate indulgence of the Christian leaders had occasioned a motley concourse in their tents of musicians, courtezans, Jewish merchants, Copts, Turks, and all the varied refuse of the Eastern nations ; so that the caftan and turban, though to drive both from the Holy Land was the professed object of the expedition, were nevertheless neither an uncommon nor an alarming sight in the camp of the Crusaders. When, however, the little insignificant figure we have described approached so nigh as to receive some interruption from the warders, he dashed his dusky green turban from his head, showed that his beard and eyebrows were shaved like those of a professed buffoon, and that the expression of his fantastic and writhen features, as well as of his little black eyes, which glittered like jet, was that of a crazed imagination.

‘Dance, marabout,’ cried the soldiers, acquainted with the manners of these wandering enthusiasts — ‘dance, or we will scourge thee with our bow-strings, till thou spin as never top did under schoolboy’s lash.’ Thus shouted the reckless warders, as much delighted at having a subject to teaze as a child when

he catches a butterfly, or a schoolboy upon discovering a bird's nest.

The marabout, as if happy to do their behests, bounded from the earth and spun his giddy round before them with singular agility, which, when contrasted with his slight and wasted figure, and diminutive appearance, made him resemble a withered leaf twirled round and around at the pleasure of the winter's breeze. His single lock of hair streamed upwards from his bald and shaven head, as if some genie upheld him by it; and indeed it seemed as if supernatural art were necessary to the execution of the wild whirling dance, in which scarce the tiptoe of the performer was seen to touch the ground. Amid the vagaries of his performance, he flew here and there, from one spot to another, still approaching, however, though almost imperceptibly, to the entrance of the royal tent; so that, when at length he sunk exhausted on the earth, after two or three bounds still higher than those which he had yet executed, he was not above thirty yards from the King's person.

'Give him water,' said one yeoman; 'they always crave a drink after their merry-go-round.'

'Aha, water, say'st thou, Long Allen?' exclaimed another archer, with a most scornful emphasis on the despised element; 'how wouldst like such beverage thyself, after such a morrice-dancing?'

'The devil a water-drop he gets here,' said a third. 'We will teach the light-footed old infidel to be a good Christian, and drink wine of Cyprus.'

'Ay—ay,' said a fourth; 'and in case he be restive, fetch thou Dick Hunter's horn, that he drenches his mare withal.'

A circle was instantly formed around the prostrate and exhausted dervise, and while one tall yeoman raised his feeble form from the ground, another presented to him a huge flagon of wine. Incapable of speech, the old man shook his head and waved away from him with his hand the liquor forbidden by the Prophet; but his tormentors were not thus to be appeased.

'The horn—the horn!' exclaimed one. 'Little difference between a Turk and a Turkish horse, and we will use him conforming.'

'By St. George, you will choke him!' said Long Allen; 'and, besides, it is a sin to throw away upon a heathen dog as much wine as would serve a good Christian for a treble night-cap.'

'Thou know'st not the nature of these Turks and pagans,

Long Allen,' replied Henry Woodstall; 'I tell thee, man, that this flagon of Cyprus will set his brains a-spinning, just in the opposite direction that they went whirling in the dancing, and so bring him, as it were, to himself again. Choke! he will no more choke on it than Ben's black bitch on the pound of butter.'

'And for grudging it,' said Tomalin Blacklees, 'why shouldst thou grudge the poor paynim devil a drop of drink on earth, since thou know'st he is not to have a drop to cool the tip of his tongue through a long eternity?'

'That were hard laws, look ye,' said Long Allen, 'only for being a Turk, as his father was before him. Had he been Christian turned heathen, I grant you the hottest corner had been good winter quarters for him.'

'Hold thy peace, Long Allen,' said Henry Woodstall; 'I tell thee that tongue of thine is not the shortest limb about thee, and I prophesy that it will bring thee into disgrace with Father Francis, as once about the black-eyed Syrian wench. But here comes the horn. Be active a bit, man, wilt thou, and just force open his teeth with the haft of thy dudgeon-dagger?'

'Hold — hold, he is conformable,' said Tomalin; 'see — see, he signs for the goblet; give him room, boys. *Oop sey es*, quoth the Dutchman: down it goes like lamb's-wool! Nay, they are true toppers when once they begin: your Turk never coughs in his cup, or stints in his liquoring.'

In fact, the dervise, or whatever he was, drank, or at least seemed to drink, the large flagon to the very bottom at a single pull; and when he took it from his lips, after the whole contents were exhausted, only uttered, with a deep sigh, the words '*Allah kerim*,' or God is merciful. There was a laugh among the yeomen who witnessed this pottle-deep potation, so obstreperous as to rouse and disturb the King, who, raising his finger, said, angrily, 'How, knaves, no respect, no observance?'

All were at once hushed into silence, well acquainted with the temper of Richard, which at some times admitted of much military familiarity, and at others exacted the most precise respect, although the latter humour was of much more rare occurrence. Hastening to a more reverent distance from the royal person, they attempted to drag along with them the marabout, who, exhausted apparently by previous fatigue, or overpowered by the potent draught he had just swallowed, resisted being moved from the spot, both with struggles and groans.

'Leave him still, ye fools,' whispered Long Allen to his mates ; 'by St. Christopher, you will make our Dickon go beside himself, and we shall have his dagger presently fly at our costards. Leave him alone, in less than a minute he will sleep like a dormouse.'

At the same moment, the monarch darted another impatient glance to the spot, and all retreated in haste, leaving the dervise on the ground, unable, as it seemed, to stir a single limb or joint of his body. In a moment afterward, all was as still and quiet as it had been before the intrusion.



## CHAPTER XXI

And wither'd murder,  
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,  
Whose howl 's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,  
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design  
Moves like a ghost.

*Macbeth.*

FOR the space of a quarter of an hour, or longer, after the incident related, all remained perfectly quiet in the front of the royal habitation. The King read, and mused in the entrance of his pavilion ; behind, and with his back turned to the same entrance, the Nubian slave still burnished the ample pavesse ; in front of all, at an hundred paces distant, the yeomen of the guard stood, sat, or lay extended on the grass, attentive to their own sports, but pursuing them in silence, while on the esplanade betwixt them and the front of the tent lay, scarcely to be distinguished from a bundle of rags, the senseless form of the marabout.

But the Nubian had the advantage of a mirror, from the brilliant reflection which the surface of the highly-polished shield now afforded, by means of which he beheld, to his alarm and surprise, that the marabout raised his head gently from the ground, so as to survey all around him, moving with a well-adjusted precaution, which seemed entirely inconsistent with a state of ebriety. He couched his head instantly, as if satisfied he was unobserved, and began, with the slightest possible appearance of voluntary effort, to drag himself, as if by chance, ever nearer and nearer to the King, but stopping, and remaining fixed at intervals, like the spider, which, moving towards her object, collapses into apparent lifelessness when she thinks she is the subject of observation. This species of movement appeared suspicious to the Ethiopian, who, on his part, prepared himself, as quietly as possible, to interfere, the instant that interference should seem to be necessary.

The marabout meanwhile glided on gradually and imperceptibly, serpent-like, or rather snail-like, till he was about ten yards' distance from Richard's person, when, starting on his feet, he sprung forward with the bound of a tiger, stood at the King's back in less than an instant, and brandished aloft the cangiar, or poniard, which he had hidden in his sleeve. Not the presence of his whole army could have saved their heroic monarch; but the motions of the Nubian had been as well calculated as those of the enthusiast, and ere the latter could strike, the former caught his uplifted arm. Turning his fanatical wrath upon what thus unexpectedly interposed betwixt him and his object, the Charegite, for such was the seeming marabout, dealt the Nubian a blow with the dagger, which, however, only grazed his arm, while the far superior strength of the Ethiopian easily dashed him to the ground. Aware of what had passed, Richard had now arisen, and, with little more of surprise, anger, or interest of any kind in his countenance than an ordinary man would show in brushing off and crushing an intrusive wasp, caught up the stool on which he had been sitting, and exclaiming only, 'Ha, dog!' dashed almost to pieces the skull of the assassin, who uttered twice, once in a loud and once in a broken tone, the words '*Allah ackbar*' (God is victorious) and expired at the King's feet.

'Ye are careful warders,' said Richard to his archers, in a tone of scornful reproach, as, aroused by the bustle of what had passed, in terror and tumult they now rushed into his tent—'watchful sentinels ye are, to leave me to do such hangman's work with my own hand. Be silent all of you, and cease your senseless clamour; saw ye never a dead Turk before? Here—cast that carrion out of the camp, strike the head from the trunk, and stick it on a lance, taking care to turn the face to Mecca, that he may the easier tell the foul impostor, on whose inspiration he came hither, how he has sped on his errand. For thee, my swart and silent friend——' he added, turning to the Ethiopian. 'But how's this? thou art wounded; and with a poisoned weapon, I warrant me, for by force of stab so weak an animal as that could scarce hope to do more than raze the lion's hide. Suck the poison from his wound one of you: the venom is harmless on the lips, though fatal when it mingles with the blood.'

The yeomen looked on each other confusedly and with hesitation, the apprehension of so strange a danger prevailing with those who feared no other.

'How now, sirrahs,' continued the King, 'are you dainty-lipped, or do you fear death, that you dally thus?'

'Not the death of a man,' said Long Allen, to whom the King looked as he spoke; 'but methinks I would not die like a poisoned rat for the sake of a black chattel there, that is bought and sold in a market like a Martlemas ox.'

'His Grace speaks to men of sucking poison,' muttered another yeoman, 'as if he said, "Go to, swallow a gooseberry"!'

'Nay,' said Richard, 'I never bade man do that which I would not do myself.'

And, without farther ceremony, and in spite of the general expostulations of those around, and the respectful opposition of the Nubian himself, the King of England applied his lips to the wound of the black slave, treating with ridicule all remonstrances and overpowering all resistance. He had no sooner intermitted his singular occupation than the Nubian started from him, and, casting a scarf over his arm, intimated by gestures, as firm in purpose as they were respectful in manner, his determination not to permit the monarch to renew so degrading an employment.

Long Allen also interposed, saying, that 'If it were necessary to prevent the King engaging again in a treatment of this kind, his own lips, tongue, and teeth were at the service of the negro (as he called the Ethiopian), and that he would eat him up bodily, rather than King Richard's mouth should again approach him.'

Neville, who entered with other officers, added his remonstrances.

'Nay — nay, make not a needless halloo about a hart that the hounds have lost, or a danger when it is over,' said the King; 'the wound will be a trifle, for the blood is scarce drawn — an angry cat had dealt a deeper scratch; and for me, I have but to take a drachm of orvietan by way of precaution, though it is needless.'

Thus spoke Richard, a little ashamed, perhaps, of his own condescension, though sanctioned both by humanity and gratitude. But when Neville continued to make remonstrances on the peril to his royal person, the King imposed silence on him.

'Peace, I prithee, make no more of it; I did it but to show these ignorant prejudiced knaves how they might help each other when these cowardly caitiffs come against us with sarbacanes and poisoned shafts. But,' he added, 'take thee this Nubian to thy quarters, Neville. I have changed my mind touching him; let him be well cared for. But, hark in thine

ear — see that he escapes thee not ; there is more in him than seems. Let him have all liberty, so that he leave not the camp. And you, ye beef-devouring, wine-swilling English mastiffs, get ye to your guard again, and be sure you keep it more warily. Think not you are now in your own land of fair play, where men speak before they strike, and shake hands ere they cut throats. Danger in our land walks openly, and with his blade drawn, and defies the foe whom he means to assault ; but here, he challenges you with a silk glove instead of a steel gauntlet, cuts your throat with the feather of a turtle-dove, stabs you with the tongue of a priest's brooch, or throttles you with the lace of my lady's boddice. Go to, keep your eyes open and your mouths shut, drink less and look sharper about you ; or I will place your huge stomachs on such short allowance as would pinch the stomach of a patient Scottishman.'

The yeomen, abashed and mortified, withdrew to their post, and Neville was beginning to remonstrate with his master upon the risk of passing over thus slightly their negligence upon their duty, and the propriety of an example in a case so peculiarly aggravated as the permitting one so suspicious as the marabout to approach within dagger's length of his person, when Richard interrupted him with, 'Speak not of it, Neville ; wouldst thou have me avenge a petty risk to myself more severely than the loss of England's banner ? It has been stolen — stolen by a thief, or delivered up by a traitor, and no blood has been shed for it. My sable friend, thou art an expounder of mysteries, saith the illustrious Soldan ; now would I give thee thine own weight in gold, if, by raising one still blacker than thyself, or by what other means thou wilt, thou couldst show me the thief who did mine honour that wrong. What say'st thou — ha ?'

The mute seemed desirous to speak, but uttered only that imperfect sound proper to his melancholy condition, then folded his arms, looked on the King with an eye of intelligence, and nodded in answer to his question.

'How !' said Richard, with joyful impatience. 'Wilt thou undertake to make discovery in this matter ?'

The Nubian slave repeated the same motion.

'But how shall we understand each other ?' said the King. 'Canst thou write, good fellow ?'

The slave again nodded in assent.

'Give him writing-tools,' said the King. 'They were readier in my father's tent than mine, but they be somewhere about,

if this scorching climate have not dried up the ink. Why, this fellow is a jewel — a black diamond, Neville.'

'So please you, my liege,' said Neville, 'if I might speak my poor mind, it were ill dealing in this ware. This man must be a wizard, and wizards deal with the Enemy, who hath most interest to sow tares among the wheat, and bring dissension into our councils, and ——'

'Peace, Neville,' said Richard. 'Halloo to your Northern hound when he is close on the haunch of the deer, and hope to recall him, but seek not to stop Plantagenet when he hath hope to retrieve his honour.'

The slave, who during this discussion had been writing, in which art he seemed skilful, now arose, and pressing what he had written to his brow, prostrated himself as usual, ere he delivered it into the King's hands. The scroll was in French, although their intercourse had hitherto been conducted by Richard in the *lingua franca*.

'To Richard, the conquering and invincible King of England, this from the humblest of his slaves. Mysteries are the sealed caskets of Heaven, but wisdom may devise means to open the lock. Were your slave stationed where the leaders of the Christian host were made to pass before him in order, doubt nothing that, if he who did the injury whereof my King complains shall be among the number, he may be made manifest in his iniquity, though it be hidden under seven veils.'

'Now, by St. George!' said King Richard, 'thou hast spoken most opportunely. Neville, thou know'st that, when we muster our troops to-morrow, the princes have agreed that, to expiate the affront offered to England in the theft of her banner, the leaders should pass our new standard as it floats on St. George's Mount, and salute it with formal regard. Believe me, the secret traitor will not dare to absent himself from an expurgation so solemn, lest his very absence should be matter of suspicion. There will we place our sable man of counsel, and, if his art can detect the villain, leave me to deal with him.'

'My liege,' said Neville, with the frankness of an English baron, 'beware what work you begin. Here is the concord of our holy league unexpectedly renewed; will you, upon such suspicion as a negro slave can instil, tear open wounds so lately closed, or will you use the solemn procession, adopted for the reparation of your honour, and establishment of unanimity amongst the discording princes, as the means of again finding



out new cause of offence, or reviving ancient quarrels? It were scarce too strong to say, this were a breach of the declaration your Grace made to the assembled council of the Crusade.'

'Neville,' said the King, sternly interrupting him, 'thy zeal makes thee presumptuous and unmannerly. Never did I promise to abstain from taking whatever means were most promising to discover the infamous author of the attack on my honour. Ere I had done so, I would have renounced my kingdom — my life. All my declarations were under this necessary and absolute qualification; only, if Austria had stepped forth and owned the injury like a man, I proffered, for the sake of Christendom, to have forgiven *him*.'

'But,' continued the baron, anxiously, 'what hope that this juggling slave of Saladin will not palter with your Grace?'

'Peace, Neville,' said the King; 'thou think'st thyself mighty wise and art but a fool. Mind thou my charge touching this fellow; there is more in him than thy Westmoreland wit can fathom. And thou, swart and silent, prepare to perform the feat thou hast promised, and, by the word of a king, thou shalt choose thine own recompense. Lo, he writes again.'

The mute accordingly wrote and delivered to the King, with the same form as before, another slip of paper, containing these words: 'The will of the King is the law to his slave; nor doth it become him to ask guerdon for discharge of his devoir.'

'*Guerdon and devoir!*' said the King, interrupting himself as he read, and speaking to Neville in the English tongue, with some emphasis on the words. 'These Eastern people will profit by the Crusaders: they are acquiring the language of chivalry. And see, Neville, how discomposed that fellow looks; were it not for his colour he would blush. I should not think it strange if he understood what I say: they are perilous linguists.'

'The poor slave cannot endure your Grace's eye,' said Neville; 'it is nothing more.'

'Well, but,' continued the King, striking the paper with his finger, as he proceeded, 'this bold scroll proceeds to say, that our trusty mute is charged with a message from Saladin to the Lady Edith Plantagenet, and craves means and opportunity to deliver it. What think'st thou of a request so modest — ha, Neville?'

'I cannot say,' said Neville, 'how such freedom may relish with your Grace; but the lease of the messenger's neck would be a short one, who should carry such a request to the Soldan on the part of your Majesty.'

‘Nay, I thank Heaven that I covet none of his sunburnt beauties,’ said Richard; ‘and for punishing this fellow for discharging his master’s errand, and that when he has just saved my life, methinks it were something too summary. I’ll tell thee, Neville, a secret — for, although our sable and mute minister be present, he cannot, thou know’st, tell it over again, even if he should chance to understand us — I tell thee, that for this fortnight past I have been under a strange spell, and I would I were disenchanted. There has no sooner any one done me good service, but lo you, he cancels his interest in me by some deep injury; and, on the other hand, he who hath deserved death at my hands for some treachery or some insult is sure to be the very person, of all others, who confers upon me some obligation that overbalances his demerits, and renders respite of his sentence a debt due from my honour. Thus, thou seest, I am deprived of the best part of my royal function, since I can neither punish men nor reward them. Until the influence of this disqualifying planet be passed away, I will say nothing concerning the request of this our sable attendant, save that it is an unusually bold one, and that his best chance of finding grace in our eyes will be, to endeavour to make the discovery which he proposes to achieve in our behalf. Meanwhile, Neville, do thou look well to him, and let him be honourably cared for. And hark thee once more,’ he said in a low whisper, ‘seek out yonder hermit of Engaddi, and bring him to me forthwith, be he saint or savage, madman or sane. Let me see him privately.’

Neville retired from the royal tent, signing to the Nubian to follow him, and much surprised at what he had seen and heard, and especially at the unusual demeanour of the King. In general, no task was so easy as to discover Richard’s immediate course of sentiment and feeling, though it might, in some cases, be difficult to calculate its duration; for no weathercock obeyed the changing wind more readily than the King his gusts of passion. But, on the present occasion, his manner seemed unusually constrained and mysterious, nor was it easy to guess whether displeasure or kindness predominated in his conduct towards his new dependant, or in the looks with which, from time to time, he regarded him. The ready service which the King had rendered to counteract the bad effects of the Nubian’s wound might seem to balance the obligation conferred on him by the slave, when he intercepted the blow of the assassin; but it seemed, as a much longer account remained to be arranged between them, that the monarch was doubtful

whether the settlement might leave him, upon the whole, debtor or creditor, and that, therefore, he assumed, in the meantime, a neutral demeanour, which might suit with either character. As for the Nubian, by whatever means he had acquired the art of writing the European languages, the King remained convinced that the English tongue at least was unknown to him, since, having watched him closely during the last part of the interview, he conceived it impossible for any one understanding a conversation, of which he was himself the subject, to have so completely avoided the appearance of taking an interest in it.

## CHAPTER XXII

Who's there? Approach — 't is kindly done —  
My learned physician and a friend.

SIR EUSTACE GREY.

OUR narrative retrogrades to a period shortly previous to the incidents last mentioned, when, as the reader must remember, the unfortunate Knight of the Leopard, bestowed upon the Arabian physician by King Richard, rather as a slave than in any other capacity, was exiled from the camp of the Crusaders, in whose ranks he had so often and so brilliantly distinguished himself. He followed his new master, for so we must now term the Hakim, to the Moorish tents which contained his retinue and his property, with the stupefied feelings of one who, fallen from the summit of a precipice, and escaping unexpectedly with life, is just able to drag himself from the fatal spot, but without the power of estimating the extent of the damage which he has sustained. Arrived at the tent, he threw himself, without speech of any kind, upon a couch of dressed buffalo's hide, which was pointed out to him by his conductor, and, hiding his face betwixt his hands, groaned heavily, as if his heart were on the point of bursting. The physician heard him, as he was giving orders to his numerous domestics to prepare for their departure the next morning before daybreak, and, moved with compassion, interrupted his occupation to sit down, cross-legged, by the side of his couch, and administer comfort according to the Oriental manner.

'My friend,' he said, 'be of good comfort; for what sayeth the poet — "It is better that a man should be the servant of a kind master than the slave of his own wild passions." Again, be of good courage; because, whereas Ysouf ben Yagoube was sold to a king by his brethren, even to Pharaoh king of Egypt, thy king hath, on the other hand, bestowed thee on one who will be to thee as a brother.'

Sir Kenneth made an effort to thank the Hakim ; but his heart was too full, and the indistinct sounds which accompanied his abortive attempts to reply induced the kind physician to desist from his premature endeavours at consolation. He left his new domestic, or guest, in quiet, to indulge his sorrows, and having commanded all the necessary preparations for their departure on the morning, sat down upon the carpet of the tent and indulged himself in a moderate repast. After he had thus refreshed himself, similar viands were offered to the Scottish knight ; but though the slaves let him understand that the next day would be far advanced ere they would halt for the purpose of refreshment, Sir Kenneth could not overcome the disgust which he felt against swallowing any nourishment, and could be prevailed upon to taste nothing, saving a draught of cold water.

He was awake, long after his Arab host had performed his usual devotions and betaken himself to his repose, nor had sleep visited him at the hour of midnight, when a movement took place among the domestics, which, though attended with no speech, and very little noise, made him aware they were loading the camels and preparing for departure. In the course of these preparations, the last person who was disturbed, excepting the physician himself, was the Knight of Scotland, whom, about three in the morning, a sort of major-domo, or master of the household, acquainted that he must arise. He did so, without farther answer, and followed him into the moonlight, where stood the camels, most of which were already loaded, and one only remained kneeling until its burden should be completed.

A little apart from the camels stood a number of horses ready bridled and saddled, and the Hakim himself, coming forth, mounted on one of them with as much agility as the grave decorum of his character permitted, and directed another, which he pointed out, to be led towards Sir Kenneth. An English officer was in attendance to escort them through the camp of the Crusaders, and to ensure their leaving it in safety, and all was ready for their departure. The pavilion which they had left was, in the meanwhile, struck with singular despatch, and the tent-poles and coverings composed the burden of the last camel ; when the physician pronouncing solemnly the verse of the Koran, ' God be our guide, and Mohammed our protector, in the desert as in the watered field,' the whole cavalcade was instantly in motion.

In traversing the camp, they were challenged by the various



sentinels who maintained guard there, and suffered to proceed in silence, or with a muttered curse upon their prophet, as they passed the post of some more zealous Crusader. At length, the last barriers were left behind them, and the party formed themselves for the march with military precaution. Two or three horsemen advanced in front as a vanguard; one or two remained a bow-shot in the rear; and, wherever the ground admitted, others were detached to keep an outlook on the flanks. In this manner they proceeded onward, while Sir Kenneth, looking back on the moonlight camp, might now indeed seem banished, deprived at once of honour and of liberty, from the glimmering banners under which he had hoped to gain additional renown, and the tented dwellings of chivalry, of Christianity, and — of Edith Plantagenet.

The Hakim, who rode by his side, observed, in his usual tone of sententious consolation — ‘It is unwise to look back when the journey lieth forward’; and as he spoke, the horse of the knight made such a perilous stumble as threatened to add a practical moral to the tale.

The knight was compelled by this hint to give more attention to the management of his steed, which more than once required the assistance and support of the check-bridle, although, in other respects, nothing could be more easy at once and active than the ambling pace at which the animal, which was a mare, proceeded.

‘The conditions of that horse,’ observed the sententious physician, ‘are like those of human fortune; seeing that amidst his most swift and easy pace the rider must guard himself against a fall, and that it is when prosperity is at the highest that our prudence should be awake and vigilant, to prevent misfortune.’

The overloaded appetite loathes even the honeycomb, and it is scarce a wonder that the knight, mortified and harassed with misfortunes and abasement, became something impatient of hearing his misery made, at every turn, the ground of proverbs and apothegms, however just and apposite.

‘Methinks,’ he said, rather peevishly, ‘I wanted no additional illustration of the instability of fortune; though I would thank thee, sir Hakim, for thy choice of a steed for me, would the jade but stumble so effectually as at once to break my neck and her own.’

‘My brother,’ answered the Arab sage, with imperturbable gravity, ‘thou speakest as one of the foolish. Thou say’st in

thy heart, that the sage should have given thee as his guest the younger and better horse, and reserved the old one for himself; but know, that the defects of the older steed may be compensated by the energies of the young rider, whereas the violence of the young horse requires to be moderated by the cold temper of the older.'

So spoke the sage; but neither to this observation did Sir Kenneth return any answer which could lead to a continuance of their conversation, and the physician, wearied, perhaps, of administering comfort to one who would not be comforted, signed to one of his retinue.

'Hassan,' he said, 'hast thou nothing wherewith to beguile the way?'

Hassan, story-teller and poet by profession, spurred up, upon this summons, to exercise his calling. 'Lord of the palace of life,' he said, addressing the physician, 'thou, before whom the angel Azrael spreadeth his wings for flight — thou, wiser than Solimaun ben Daoud, upon whose signet was inscribed the REAL NAME which controls the spirits of the elements — forbid it, Heaven, that, while thou travellest upon the track of benevolence, bearing healing and hope wherever thou comest, thine own course should be saddened for lack of the tale and of the song. Behold, while thy servant is at thy side, he will pour forth the treasures of his memory, as the fountain sendeth her stream beside the pathway, for the refreshment of him that walketh thereon.'

After this exordium, Hassan uplifted his voice, and began a tale of love and magic, intermixed with feats of warlike achievement, and ornamented with abundant quotations from the Persian poets, with whose compositions the orator seemed familiar. The retinue of the physician, such excepted as were necessarily detained in attendance on the camels, thronged up to the narrator, and pressed as close as deference for their master permitted, to enjoy the delight which the inhabitants of the East have ever derived from this species of exhibition.

At another time, notwithstanding his imperfect knowledge of the language, Sir Kenneth might have been interested in the recitation, which, though dictated by a more extravagant imagination, and expressed in more inflated and metaphorical language, bore yet a strong resemblance to the romances of chivalry, then so fashionable in Europe. But as matters stood with him, he was scarcely even sensible that a man in the centre of the cavalcade recited and sung, in a low tone, for nearly two

hours, modulating his voice to the various moods of passion introduced into the tale, and receiving, in return, now low murmurs of applause, now muttered expressions of wonder, now sighs and tears, and sometimes, what it was far more difficult to extract from such an audience, a tribute of smiles, and even laughter.

During the recitation, the attention of the exile, however abstracted by his own deep sorrow, was occasionally awakened by the low wail of a dog, secured in a wicker inclosure suspended on one of the camels, which, as an experienced woodsman, he had no hesitation in recognising to be that of his own faithful hound; and from the plaintive tone of the animal, he had no doubt that he was sensible of his master's vicinity, and, in his way, invoking his assistance for liberty and rescue.

'Alas! poor Roswal,' he said, 'thou callest for aid and sympathy upon one in stricter bondage than thou thyself art. I will not seem to heed thee, or return thy affection, since it would serve but to load our parting with yet more bitterness.'

Thus passed the hours of night, and the space of dim hazy dawn which forms the twilight of a Syrian morning. But when the very first lines of the sun's disk began to rise above the level horizon, and when the very first level ray shot glimmering in dew along the surface of the desert, which the travellers had now attained, the sonorous voice of El Hakim himself overpowered and cut short the narrative of the tale-teller, while he caused to resound along the sands the solemn summons which the muezzins thunder at morning from the minaret of every mosque.

'To prayer — to prayer! God is the one God. To prayer — to prayer! Mohammed is the prophet of God. To prayer — to prayer! Time is flying from you. To prayer — to prayer! Judgment is drawing nigh to you.'

In an instant each Moslem cast himself from his horse, turned his face towards Mecca, and performed with sand an imitation of those ablutions which were elsewhere required to be made with water, while each individual, in brief but fervent ejaculations, recommended himself to the care, and his sins to the forgiveness, of God and the Prophet.

Even Sir Kenneth, whose reason at once and prejudices were offended by seeing his companions in that which he considered as an act of idolatry, could not help respecting the sincerity of their misguided zeal, and being stimulated by their fervour to apply supplications to Heaven in a purer form, wondering,

meanwhile, what new-born feelings could teach him to accompany in prayer, though with varied invocation, those very Saracens, whose heathenish worship he had conceived a crime dishonourable to the land in which high miracles had been wrought, and where the day-star of redemption had arisen.

The act of devotion, however, though rendered in such strange society, burst purely from his natural feelings of religious duty, and had its usual effect in composing the spirits, which had been long harassed by so rapid a succession of calamities. The sincere and earnest approach of the Christian to the throne of the Almighty teaches the best lesson of patience under affliction ; since wherefore should we mock the Deity with supplications, when we insult Him by murmuring under His decrees ? or how, while our prayers have in every word admitted the vanity and nothingness of the things of time in comparison to those of eternity, should we hope to deceive the Searcher of Hearts, by permitting the world and worldly passions to reassume the reins even immediately after a solemn address to Heaven ? But Sir Kenneth was not of these. He felt himself comforted and strengthened, and better prepared to execute or submit to whatever his destiny might call upon him to do or to suffer.

Meanwhile, the party of Saracens regained their saddles and continued their route, and the tale-teller, Hassan, resumed the thread of his narrative ; but it was no longer to the same attentive audience. A horseman, who had ascended some high ground on the right hand of the little column, had returned on a speedy gallop to El Hakim, and communicated with him. Four or five more cavaliers had then been despatched, and the little band, which might consist of about twenty or thirty persons, began to follow them with their eyes, as men from whose gestures, and advance or retreat, they were to augur good or evil. Hassan, finding his audience inattentive, or being himself attracted by the dubious appearances on the flank, stinted in his song ; and the march became silent, save when a camel-driver called out to his patient charge, or some anxious follower of the Hakim communicated with his next neighbour in a hurried and low whisper.

This suspense continued until they had rounded a ridge, composed of hillocks of sand, which concealed from their main body the object that had created this alarm among their scouts. Sir Kenneth could now see, at the distance of a mile or more, a dark object moving rapidly on the bosom of the desert, which his experienced eye recognised for a party of cavalry, much

superior to their own in numbers, and, from the thick and frequent flashes which flung back the level beams of the rising sun, it was plain that these were Europeans in their complete panoply.

The anxious looks which the horsemen of El Hakim now cast upon their leader seemed to indicate deep apprehension; while he, with gravity as undisturbed as when he called his followers to prayer, detached two of his best-mounted cavaliers, with instructions to approach as closely as prudence permitted to these travellers of the desert, and observe more minutely their numbers, their character, and, if possible, their purpose. The approach of danger, or what was feared as such, was like a stimulating draught to one in apathy, and recalled Sir Kenneth to himself and his situation.

'What fear you from these Christian horsemen, for such they seem?' he said to the Hakim.

'Fear!' said El Hakim, repeating the word disdainfully. 'The sage fears nothing but Heaven, but ever expects from wicked men the worst which they can do.'

'They are Christians,' said Sir Kenneth, 'and it is the time of truce; why should you fear a breach of faith?'

'They are the priestly soldiers of the Temple,' answered El Hakim, 'whose vow limits them to know neither truth nor faith with the worshippers of Islam. May the Prophet blight them, both root, branch, and twig! Their peace is war, and their faith is falsehood. Other invaders of Palestine have their times and moods of courtesy. The lion Richard will spare when he has conquered; the eagle Philip will close his wing when he has stricken a prey; even the Austrian bear will sleep when he is gorged; but this horde of ever-hungry wolves know neither pause nor satiety in their rapine. Seest thou not that they are detaching a party from their main body, and that they take an eastern direction? Yon are their pages and squires, whom they train up in their accursed mysteries, and whom, as lighter mounted, they send to cut us off from our watering-place. But they will be disappointed: *I* know the war of the desert yet better than they.'

He spoke a few words to his principal officer, and his whole demeanour and countenance was at once changed from the solemn repose of an Eastern sage, accustomed more to contemplation than to action, into the prompt and proud expression of a gallant soldier, whose energies are roused by the near approach of a danger which he at once foresees and despises.



To Sir Kenneth's eyes the approaching crisis had a different aspect, and when Adonbec said to him, 'Thou must tarry close by my side,' he answered solemnly in the negative.

'Yonder,' he said, 'are my comrades in arms — the men in whose society I have vowed to fight or fall. On their banner gleams the sign of our most blessed redemption; I cannot fly from the Cross in company with the Crescent.'

'Fool!' said the Hakim; 'their first action would be to do thee to death, were it only to conceal their breach of the truce.'

'Of that I must take my chance,' replied Sir Kenneth; 'but I wear not the bonds of the infidels an instant longer than I can cast them from me.'

'Then will I compel thee to follow me,' said El Hakim.

'Compel!' answered Sir Kenneth, angrily. 'Wert thou not my benefactor, or one who has showed will to be such, and were it not that it is to thy confidence I owe the freedom of these hands, which thou mightst have loaded with fetters, I would show thee that, unarmed as I am, compulsion would be no easy task.'

'Enough — enough,' replied the Arabian physician, 'we lose time even when it is becoming precious.'

So saying, he threw his arm aloft, and uttered a loud and shrill cry, as a signal to those of his retinue, who instantly dispersed themselves on the face of the desert, in as many different directions as a chaplet of beads when the string is broken. Sir Kenneth had no time to note what ensued; for, at the same instant, the Hakim seized the rein of his steed, and putting his own to its metal, both sprung forth at once with the suddenness of light, and at a pitch of velocity which almost deprived the Scottish knight of the power of respiration, and left him absolutely incapable, had he been desirous, to have checked the career of his guide. Practised as Sir Kenneth was in horsemanship from his earliest youth, the speediest horse he had ever mounted was a tortoise in comparison to those of the Arabian sage. They spurned the sand from behind them — they seemed to devour the desert before them — miles flew away with minutes, and yet their strength seemed unabated, and their respiration as free as when they first started upon the wonderful race. The motion, too, as easy as it was swift, seemed more like flying through the air than riding on the earth, and was attended with no unpleasant sensation, save the awe naturally felt by one who is moving at such astonishing

speed, and the difficulty of breathing occasioned by their passing through the air so rapidly.

It was not until after an hour of this portentous motion, and when all human pursuit was far, far behind, that the Hakim at length relaxed his speed, and, slackening the pace of the horses into a hand-gallop, began, in a voice as composed and even as if he had been walking for the last hour, a descant upon the excellence of his coursers to the Scot, who, breathless, half blind, half deaf, and altogether giddy, from the rapidity of this singular ride, hardly comprehended the words which flowed so freely from his companion.

‘These horses,’ he said, ‘are of the breed called the Winged, equal in speed to aught excepting the Borak of the Prophet. They are fed on the golden barley of Yemen, mixed with spices, and with a small portion of dried sheep’s flesh. Kings have given provinces to possess them, and their age is active as their youth. Thou, Nazarene, art the first, save a true believer, that ever had beneath his loins one of this noble race, a gift of the Prophet himself to the blessed Ali, his kinsman and lieutenant, well called the Lion of God. Time lays his touch so lightly on these generous steeds, that the mare on which thou now sittest has seen five times five years pass over her, yet retains her pristine speed and vigour, only that in the career the support of a bridle, managed by a hand more experienced than thine, hath now become necessary. May the Prophet be blessed, who hath bestowed on the true believers the means of advance and retreat, which causeth their iron-clothed enemies to be worn out with their own ponderous weight! How the horses of yonder dog Templars must have snorted and blown, when they had toiled fetlock-deep in the desert for one-twentieth part of the space which these brave steeds have left behind them, without one thick pant, or a drop of moisture upon their sleek and velvet coats!’

The Scottish knight, who had now begun to recover his breath and powers of attention, could not help acknowledging in his heart the advantage possessed by these Eastern warriors in a race of animals alike proper for advance or retreat, and so admirably adapted to the level and sandy deserts of Arabia and Syria. But he did not choose to augment the pride of the Moslem by acquiescing in his proud claim of superiority, and therefore suffered the conversation to drop, and, looking around him, could now, at the more moderate pace at which they moved, distinguish that he was in a country not unknown to him.

The blighted borders and sullen waters of the Dead Sea, the ragged and precipitous chain of mountains arising on the left, the two or three palms clustered together, forming the single green speck on the bosom of the waste wilderness — objects which, once seen, were scarcely to be forgotten — showed to Sir Kenneth that they were approaching the fountain called the Diamond of the Desert, which had been the scene of his interview on a former occasion with the Saracen Emir Sheerkohf, or Ilderim. In a few minutes they checked their horses beside the spring, and the Hakim invited Sir Kenneth to descend from horseback, and repose himself as in a place of safety. They unbridled their steeds, El Hakim observing that farther care of them was unnecessary, since they would be speedily joined by some of the best-mounted among his slaves, who would do what farther was needful.

‘Meantime,’ he said, spreading some food on the grass, ‘eat and drink, and be not discouraged. Fortune may raise up or abase the ordinary mortal, but the sage and the soldier should have minds beyond her control.’

The Scottish knight endeavoured to testify his thanks by showing himself docile; but though he strove to eat out of complaisance, the singular contrast between his present situation and that which he had occupied on the same spot, when the envoy of princes and the victor in combat, came like a cloud over his mind, and fasting, lassitude, and fatigue oppressed his bodily powers. El Hakim examined his hurried pulse, his red and inflamed eye, his heated hand, and his shortened respiration.

‘The mind,’ he said, ‘grows wise by watching, but her sister the body, of coarser materials, needs the support of repose. Thou must sleep; and that thou mayst do so to refreshment, thou must take a draught mingled with this elixir.’

He drew from his bosom a small crystal vial, cased in silver filigree-work, and dropped into a little golden drinking-cup a small portion of a dark-coloured fluid.

‘This,’ he said, ‘is one of those productions which Allah hath sent on earth for a blessing, though man’s weakness and wickedness have sometimes converted it into a curse. It is powerful as the wine-cup of the Nazarene to drop the curtain on the sleepless eye, and to relieve the burden of the overloaded bosom; but when applied to the purposes of indulgence and debauchery, it rends the nerves, destroys the strength, weakens the intellect, and undermines life. But fear not thou to use its virtues in

the time of need, for the wise man warms him by the same fire-brand with which the madman burneth the tent.' <sup>1</sup>

'I have seen too much of thy skill, sage Hakim,' said Sir Kenneth, 'to debate thine hest'; and swallowed the narcotic, mingled as it was with some water from the spring, then wrapped him in the haik, or Arab cloak, which had been fastened to his saddle-pommel, and, according to the directions of the physician, stretched himself at ease in the shade to await the promised repose. Sleep came not at first, but in her stead a train of pleasing, yet not rousing or awakening, sensations. A state ensued in which, still conscious of his own identity and his own condition, the knight felt enabled to consider them not only without alarm and sorrow, but as composedly as he might have viewed the story of his misfortunes acted upon a stage, or rather as a disembodied spirit might regard the transactions of its past existence. From this state of repose, amounting almost to apathy respecting the past, his thoughts were carried forward to the future, which, in spite of all that existed to overcloud the prospect, glittered with such hues as, under much happier auspices, his unstimulated imagination had not been able to produce, even in its most exalted state. Liberty, fame, successful love, appeared to be the certain, and not very distant, prospect of the enslaved exile, the dishonoured knight, even of the despairing lover, who had placed his hopes of happiness so far beyond the prospect of chance, in her wildest possibilities, serving to countenance his wishes. Gradually, as the intellectual sight became overclouded, these gay visions became obscure, like the dying hues of sunset, until they were at last lost in total oblivion; and Sir Kenneth lay extended at the feet of El Hakim, to all appearance, but for his deep respiration, as inanimate a corpse as if life had actually departed.

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<sup>1</sup> Some preparation of opium seems to be intimated.

## CHAPTER XXIII

Mid these wild scenes enchantment waves her hand,  
To change the face of the mysterious land ;  
Till the bewildering scenes around us seem  
The vain productions of a feverish dream.

*Astolpho, a Romance.*

WHEN the Knight of the Leopard awoke from his long and profound repose, he found himself in circumstances so different from those in which he had lain down to sleep, that he doubted whether he was not still dreaming, or whether the scene had not been changed by magic. Instead of the damp grass, he lay on a couch of more than Oriental luxury, and some kind hands had, during his repose, stripped him of the cassock of chamois which he wore under his armour, and substituted a night-dress of the finest linen, and a loose gown of silk. He had been canopied only by the palm-trees of the desert, but now he lay beneath a silken pavilion, which blazed with the richest colours of the Chinese loom, while a slight curtain of gauze, displayed around his couch, was calculated to protect his repose from the insects, to which he had, ever since his arrival in these climates, been a constant and passive prey. He looked around, as if to convince himself that he was actually awake, and all that fell beneath his eye partook of the splendour of his dormitory. A portable bath of cedar, lined with silver, was ready for use, and steamed with the odours which had been used in preparing it. On a small stand of ebony beside the couch stood a silver vase, containing sherbet of the most exquisite quality, cold as snow, and which the thirst that followed the use of the strong narcotic rendered peculiarly delicious. Still farther to dispel the dregs of intoxication which it had left behind, the knight resolved to use the bath, and experienced in doing so a delightful refreshment. Having dried himself with napkins of the Indiar wool, he would willingly have resumed his own coarse garments, that he might



go forth to see whether the world was as much changed without as within the place of his repose. These, however, were nowhere to be seen, but in their place he found a Saracen dress of rich materials, with sabre and poniard, and all befitting an emir of distinction. He was able to suggest no motive to himself for this exuberance of care, excepting a suspicion that these attentions were intended to shake him in his religious profession; as indeed it was well known that the high esteem of the European knowledge and courage made the Soldan unbounded in his gifts to those who, having become his prisoners, had been induced to take the turban. Sir Kenneth, therefore, crossing himself devoutly, resolved to set all such snares at defiance; and that he might do so the more firmly, conscientiously determined to avail himself as moderately as possible of the attentions and luxuries thus liberally heaped upon him. Still, however, he felt his head oppressed and sleepy, and aware, too, that his undress was not fit for appearing abroad, he reclined upon the couch, and was again locked in the arms of slumber.

But this time his rest was not unbroken, for he was awakened by the voice of the physician at the door of the tent, inquiring after his health, and whether he had rested sufficiently. 'May I enter your tent?' he concluded, 'for the curtain is drawn before the entrance.'

'The master,' replied Sir Kenneth, determined to show that he was not surprised into forgetfulness of his own condition, 'need demand no permission to enter the tent of the slave.'

'But if I come not as a master?' said El Hakim, still without entering.

'The physician,' answered the knight, 'hath free access to the bedside of his patient.'

'Neither come I now as a physician,' replied El Hakim; 'and therefore I still request permission ere I come under the covering of thy tent.'

'Whoever comes as a friend,' said Sir Kenneth, 'and such thou hast hitherto shown thyself to me, the habitation of the friend is ever open to him.'

'Yet once again,' said the Eastern sage, after the periphrastical manner of his countrymen, 'supposing that I come not as a friend?'

'Come as thou wilt,' said the Scottish knight, somewhat impatient of this circumlocution — 'be what thou wilt, thou knowest well it is neither in my power nor my inclination to refuse thee entrance.'

'I come, then,' said El Hakim, 'as your ancient foe ; but a fair and a generous one.'

He entered as he spoke ; and when he stood before the bedside of Sir Kenneth, the voice continued to be that of Adonbec, the Arabian physician, but the form, dress, and features were those of Ilderim of Kurdistan, called Sheerkohf. Sir Kenneth gazed upon him, as if he expected the vision to depart, like something created by his imagination.

'Doth it so surprise thee,' said Ilderim, 'and thou an approved warrior, to see that a soldier knows somewhat of the art of healing ? I say to thee, Nazarene, that an accomplished cavalier should know how to dress his steed as well as how to ride him ; how to forge his sword upon the stithy, as well as how to use it in battle ; how to burnish his arms, as well as how to wear them ; and, above all, how to cure wounds as well as how to inflict them.'

As he spoke, the Christian knight repeatedly shut his eyes, and while they remained closed, the idea of the Hakim, with his long, flowing, dark robes, high Tartar cap, and grave gestures, was present to his imagination ; but so soon as he opened them, the graceful and richly-gemmed turban, the light hauberk of steel rings entwisted with silver, which glanced brilliantly as it obeyed every inflection of the body, the features freed from their formal expression, less swarthy, and no longer shadowed by the mass of hair (now limited to a well-trimmed beard), announced the soldier and not the sage.

'Art thou still so much surprised,' said the Emir, 'and hast thou walked in the world with such little observance, as to wonder that men are not always what they seem ? Thou thyself—art thou what thou seemest ?'

'No, by St. Andrew !' exclaimed the knight ; 'for, to the whole Christian camp I seem a traitor, and I know myself to be a true, though an erring, man.'

'Even so I judged thee,' said Ilderim, 'and as we had eaten salt together, I deemed myself bound to rescue thee from death and contumely. But wherefore lie you still on your couch, since the sun is high in the heavens ? or are the vestments which my sumpter-camels have afforded unworthy of your wearing ?'

'Not unworthy, surely, but unfitting for it,' replied the Scot ; 'give me the dress of a slave, noble Ilderim, and I will don it with pleasure ; but I cannot brook to wear the habit of the free Eastern warrior, with the turban of the Moslem.'

'Nazarene,' answered the Emir, 'thy nation so easily entertain suspicion, that it may well render themselves suspected. Have I not told thee that Saladin desires no converts saving those whom the holy Prophet shall dispose to submit themselves to his law? Violence and bribery are alike alien to his plan for extending the true faith. Harken to me, my brother. When the blind man was miraculously restored to sight, the scales dropped from his eyes at the Divine pleasure; think'st thou that any earthly leech could have removed them? No. Such mediciner might have tormented the patient with his instruments, or perhaps soothed him with his balsams and cordials, but dark as he was must the darkened man have remained; and it is even so with the blindness of the understanding. If there be those among the Franks who, for the sake of worldly lucre, have assumed the turban of the Prophet, and followed the laws of Islam, with their own consciences be the blame. Themselves sought out the bait; it was not flung to them by the Soldan. And when they shall hereafter be sentenced, as hypocrites, to the lowest gulf of Hell, below Christian and Jew, magician and idolater, and condemned to eat the fruit of the tree Yacoun, which is the heads of demons, to themselves, not to the Soldan, shall their guilt and their punishment be attributed. Wherefore wear, without doubt or scruple, the vesture prepared for you, since, if you proceed to the camp of Saladin, your own native dress will expose you to troublesome observation, and perhaps to insult.'

'If I go to the camp of Saladin?' said Sir Kenneth, repeating the words of the Emir. 'Alas! am I a free agent, and rather must I *not* go wherever your pleasure carries me?'

'Thine own will may guide thine own motions,' said the Emir, 'as freely as the wind which moveth the dust of the desert in what direction it chooseth. The noble enemy who met, and wellnigh mastered, my sword cannot become my slave like him who has crouched beneath it. If wealth and power would tempt thee to join our people, I could ensure thy possessing them; but the man who refused the favours of the Soldan when the axe was at his head will not, I fear, now accept them, when I tell him he has his free choice.'

'Complete your generosity, noble Emir,' said Sir Kenneth, 'by forbearing to show me a mode of requital which conscience forbids me to comply with. Permit me rather to express, as bound in courtesy, my gratitude for this most chivalrous bounty, this undeserved generosity.'

‘Say not undeserved,’ replied the Emir Ilderim; ‘was it not through thy conversation, and thy account of the beauties which grace the court of the Melech Ric, that I ventured me thither in disguise, and thereby procured a sight the most blessed that I have ever enjoyed — that I ever shall enjoy, until the glories of Paradise beam on my eyes?’

‘I understand you not,’ said Sir Kenneth, colouring alternately and turning pale, as one who felt that the conversation was taking a tone of the most painful delicacy.

‘Not understand me!’ exclaimed the Emir. ‘If the sight I saw in the tent of King Richard escaped thine observation, I will account it duller than the edge of a buffoon’s wooden falchion. True, thou wert under sentence of death at the time; but, in my case, had my head been dropping from the trunk, the last strained glances of my eyeballs had distinguished with delight such a vision of loveliness, and the head would have rolled itself towards the incomparable houris, to kiss with its quivering lips the hem of their vestments. Yonder royalty of England, who for her superior loveliness deserves to be queen of the universe, what tenderness in her blue eye, what lustre in her tresses of dishevelled gold! By the tomb of the Prophet, I scarce think that the houri who shall present to me the diamond cup of immortality will deserve so warm a caress!’

‘Saracen,’ said Sir Kenneth, sternly, ‘thou speakest of the wife of Richard of England, of whom men think not and speak not as a woman to be won, but as a queen to be revered.’

‘I cry you mercy,’ said the Saracen. ‘I had forgotten your superstitious veneration for the sex, which you consider rather fit to be wondered at and worshipped than wooed and possessed. I warrant, since thou exactest such profound respect to yonder tender piece of frailty, whose every motion, step, and look bespeaks her very woman, less than absolute adoration must not be yielded to her of the dark tresses and nobly-speaking eye. *She*, indeed, I will allow, hath in her noble port and majestic mien something at once pure and firm; yet even she, when pressed by opportunity and a forward lover, would, I warrant thee, thank him in her heart rather for treating her as a mortal than as a goddess.’

‘Respect the kinswoman of Cœur-de-Lion!’ said Sir Kenneth, in a tone of unexpressed anger.

‘Respect her!’ answered the Emir, in scorn; ‘by the Caaba, and if I do, it shall be rather as the bride of Saladin.’

‘The infidel Soldan is unworthy to salute even a spot that

has been pressed by the foot of Edith Plantagenet,' exclaimed the Christian, springing from his couch.

'Ha! what said the Giaour?' exclaimed the Emir, laying his hand on his poniard hilt, while his forehead glowed like glancing copper, and the muscles of his lips and cheeks wrought till each curl of his beard seemed to twist and screw itself, as if alive with instinctive wrath. But the Scottish knight, who had stood the lion-anger of Richard, was unappalled at the tiger-like mood of the chafed Saracen.

'What I have said,' continued Sir Kenneth, with folded arms and dauntless look, 'I would, were my hands loose, maintain on foot or horseback against all mortals; and would hold it not the most memorable deed of my life to support it with my good broadsword against a score of these sickles and bodkins,' pointing at the curved sabre and small poniard of the Emir.

The Saracen recovered his composure as the Christian spoke, so far as to withdraw his hand from his weapon, as if the motion had been without meaning; but still continued in deep ire.

'By the sword of the Prophet,' he said, 'which is the key both of Heaven and Hell, he little values his own life, brother, who uses the language thou dost. Believe me, that were thine hands loose, as thou term'st it, one single true believer would find them so much to do, that thou wouldst soon wish them fettered again in manacles of iron.'

'Sooner would I wish them hewn off by the shoulder-blades,' replied Sir Kenneth.

'Well. Thy hands are bound at present,' said the Saracen, in a more amicable tone — 'bound by thine own gentle sense of courtesy, nor have I any present purpose of setting them at liberty. We have proved each other's strength and courage ere now, and we may again meet in a fair field; and shame befall him who shall be the first to part from his foeman! But now we are friends, and I look for aid from thee, rather than hard terms or defiance.'

'We *are* friends,' repeated the knight; and there was a pause, during which the fiery Saracen paced the tent, like the lion, who, after violent irritation, is said to take that method of cooling the distemperature of his blood, ere he stretches himself to repose in his den. The colder European remained unaltered in posture and aspect; yet he, doubtless, was also engaged in subduing the angry feelings which had been so unexpectedly awakened.

'Let us reason of this calmly,' said the Saracen; 'I am a



physician, as thou know'st, and it is written, that he who would have his wound cured must not shrink when the leech probes and tents it. Seest thou, I am about to lay my finger on the sore. Thou lovest this kinswoman of the Melech Ric. Unfold the veil that shrouds thy thoughts — or unfold it not if thou wilt, for mine eyes see through its coverings.'

'I *loved* her,' answered Sir Kenneth, after a pause, 'as a man loves Heaven's grace, and sued for her favour like a sinner for Heaven's pardon.'

'And you love her no longer?' said the Saracen.

'Alas,' answered Sir Kenneth, 'I am no longer worthy to love her. I pray thee cease this discourse: thy words are poniards to me.'

'Pardon me but a moment,' continued Ilderim. 'When thou, a poor and obscure soldier, didst so boldly and so highly fix thine affection, tell me, hadst thou good hope of its issue?'

'Love exists not without hope,' replied the knight; 'but mine was as nearly allied to despair as that of the sailor swimming for his life, who, as he surmounts billow after billow, catches by intervals some gleam of the distant beacon, which shows him there is land in sight, though his sinking heart and wearied limbs assure him that he shall never reach it.'

'And now,' said Ilderim, 'these hopes are sunk — that solitary light is quenched for ever?'

'For ever,' answered Sir Kenneth, in the tone of an echo from the bosom of a ruined sepulchre.

'Methinks,' said the Saracen, 'if all thou lackest were some such distant meteoric glimpse of happiness as thou hadst formerly, thy beacon-light might be rekindled, thy hope fished up from the ocean in which it has sunk, and thou thyself, good knight, restored to the exercise and amusement of nourishing thy fantastic passion upon a diet as unsubstantial as moonlight; for, if thou stood'st to-morrow fair in reputation as ever thou wert, she whom thou lovest will not be less the daughter of princes and the elected bride of Saladin.'

'I would it so stood,' said the Scot, 'and if I did not ——'

He stopt short, like a man who is afraid of boasting, under circumstances which did not permit his being put to the test. The Saracen smiled as he concluded the sentence.

'Thou wouldst challenge the Soldan to single combat?' said he.

'And if I did,' said Sir Kenneth, haughtily, 'Saladin's would

neither be the first nor the best turban that I have couched lance at.'

'Ay, but methinks the Soldan might regard it as too unequal a mode of perilling the chance of a royal bride, and the event of a great war,' said the Emir.

'He may be met with in the front of battle,' said the knight, his eyes gleaming with the ideas which such a thought inspired.

'He has been ever found there,' said Ilderim; 'nor is it his wont to turn his horse's head from any brave encounter. But it was not of the Soldan that I meant to speak. In a word, if it will content thee to be placed in such reputation as may be attained by detection of the thief who stole the banner of England, I can put thee in a fair way of achieving this task. That is, if thou wilt be governed; for what says Lokman, "If the child would walk, the nurse must lead him; if the ignorant would understand, the wise must instruct."'

'And thou art wise, Ilderim,' said the Scot — 'wise though a Saracen, and generous though an infidel. I have witnessed that thou art both. Take, then, the guidance of this matter; and so thou ask nothing of me contrary to my loyalty and my Christian faith, I will obey thee punctually. Do what thou hast said, and take my life when it is accomplished.'

'Listen thou to me then,' said the Saracen. 'Thy noble hound is now recovered, by the blessing of that divine medicine which healeth man and beast, and by his sagacity shall those who assailed him be discovered.'

'Ha!' said the knight, 'methinks I comprehend thee: I was dull not to think of this!'

'But tell me,' added the Emir, 'hast thou any followers or retainers in the camp by whom the animal may be known?'

'I dismissed,' said Sir Kenneth, 'my old attendant, thy patient, with a varlet that waited on him, at the time when I expected to suffer death, giving him letters for my friends in Scotland; there are none other to whom the dog is familiar. But then my own person is well known — my very speech will betray me, in a camp where I have played no mean part for many months.'

'Both he and thou shall be disguised, so as to escape even close examination. I tell thee,' said the Saracen, 'that not thy brother in arms, not thy brother in blood, shall discover thee, if thou be guided by my counsels. Thou hast seen me do matters more difficult: he that can call the dying from the darkness of the shadow of death can easily cast a mist before

the eyes of the living. But mark me — there is still the condition annexed to this service, that thou deliver a letter of Saladin to the niece of the Melech Ric, whose name is as difficult to our Eastern tongue and lips as her beauty is delightful to our eyes.'

Sir Kenneth paused before he answered, and the Saracen observing his hesitation, demanded of him, 'If he feared to undertake this message?'

'Not if there were death in the execution,' said Sir Kenneth: 'I do but pause to consider whether it consists with my honour to bear the letter of the Soldan, or with that of the Lady Edith to receive it from a heathen prince.'

'By the head of Mohammed and by the honour of a soldier, by the tomb at Mecca and by the soul of my father,' said the Emir, 'I swear to thee that the letter is written in all honour and respect. The song of the nightingale will sooner blight the rose-bower she loves than will the words of the Soldan offend the ears of the lovely kinswoman of England.'

'Then,' said the knight, 'I will bear the Soldan's letter faithfully, as if I were his born vassal; understanding, that beyond this simple act of service, which I will render with fidelity, from me of all men he can least expect mediation or advice in this his strange love-suit.'

'Saladin is noble,' answered the Emir, 'and will not spur a generous horse to a leap which he cannot achieve. Come with me to my tent,' he added, 'and thou shalt be presently equipped with a disguise as unsearchable as midnight; so thou may'st walk the camp of the Nazarenes as if thou hadst on thy finger the signet of Giaougi.'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the same with Gyges.

## CHAPTER XXIV

A grain of dust,  
Soiling our cup, will make our sense reject  
Fastidiously the draught which we did thirst for ;  
A rusted nail, placed near the faithful compass,  
Will sway it from the truth, and wreck the argosy.  
Even this small cause of anger and disgust  
Will break the bonds of amity 'mongst princes,  
And wreck their noblest purposes.

*The Crusade.*

THE reader can now have little doubt who the Ethiopian slave really was, with what purpose he had sought Richard's camp, and wherefore and with what hope he now stood close to the person of that monarch, as, surrounded by his valiant peers of England and Normandy, Cœur-de-Lion stood on the summit of St. George's Mount, with the banner of England by his side, borne by the most goodly person in the army, being his own natural brother, William with the Long Sword, Earl of Salisbury, the offspring of Henry the Second's amour with the celebrated Rosamond of Woodstock.

From several expressions in the King's conversation with Neville on the preceding day, the Nubian was left in anxious doubt whether his disguise had not been penetrated, especially as that the King seemed to be aware in what manner the agency of the dog was expected to discover the thief who stole the banner, although the circumstance of such an animal's having been wounded on the occasion had been scarce mentioned in Richard's presence. Nevertheless, as the King continued to treat him in no other manner than his exterior required, the Nubian remained uncertain whether he was or was not discovered, and determined not to throw his disguise aside voluntarily.

Meanwhile, the powers of the various Crusading princes, arrayed under their royal and princely leaders, swept in long order around the base of the little mound ; and as those of each

different country passed by, their commanders advanced a step or two up the hill, and made a signal of courtesy to Richard and to the standard of England, 'in sign of regard and amity,' as the protocol of the ceremony heedfully expressed it, 'not of subjection or vassalage.' The spiritual dignitaries, who in those days veiled not their bonnets to created being, bestowed on the King and his symbol of command their blessing instead of rendering obeisance.

Thus the long files marched on, and, diminished as they were by so many causes, appeared still an iron host, to whom the conquest of Palestine might seem an easy task. The soldiers, inspired by the consciousness of united strength, sat erect in their steel saddles, while it seemed that the trumpets sounded more cheerfully shrill, and the steeds, refreshed by rest and provender, chafed on the bit, and trode the ground more proudly. On they passed, troop after troop, banners waving, spears glancing, plumes dancing, in long perspective — a host composed of different nations, complexions, languages, arms, and appearances, but all fired, for the time, with the holy yet romantic purpose of rescuing the distressed daughter of Zion from her thralldom, and redeeming the sacred earth, which more than mortal had trodden, from the yoke of the unbelieving pagan. And it must be owned, that if, in other circumstances, the species of courtesy rendered to the King of England by so many warriors from whom he claimed no natural allegiance had in it something that might have been thought humiliating, yet the nature and cause of the war were so fitted to his pre-eminently chivalrous character and renowned feats in arms, that claims which might elsewhere have been urged were there forgotten, and the brave did willing homage to the bravest, in an expedition where the most undaunted and energetic courage was necessary to success.

The good King was seated on horseback about half-way up the mount, a morion on his head, surmounted by a crown, which left his manly features exposed to public view, as with cool and considerate eye he perused each rank as it passed him, and returned the salutation of the leaders. His tunic was of sky-coloured velvet, covered with plates of silver, and his hose of crimson silk, slashed with cloth of gold. By his side stood the seeming Ethiopian slave, holding the noble dog in a leash, such as was used in woodcraft. It was a circumstance which attracted no notice, for many of the princes of the Crusade had introduced black slaves into their household, in imitation of



the barbarous splendour of the Saracens. Over the King's head streamed the large folds of the banner, and, as he looked to it from time to time, he seemed to regard a ceremony, indifferent to himself personally, as important, when considered as atoning an indignity offered to the kingdom which he ruled. In the background, and on the very summit of the mount, a wooden turret, erected for the occasion, held the Queen Berengaria and the principal ladies of the court. To this the King looked from time to time, and then ever and anon his eyes were turned on the Nubian and the dog, but only when such leaders approached as, from circumstances of previous ill-will, he suspected of being accessory to the theft of the standard, or whom he judged capable of a crime so mean.

Thus, he did not look in that direction when Philip Augustus of France approached at the head of his splendid troops of Gallic chivalry; nay, he anticipated the motions of the French king, by descending the mount as the latter came up the ascent, so that they met in the middle space, and blended their greetings so gracefully that it appeared they met in fraternal equality. The sight of the two greatest princes in Europe, in rank at once and power, thus publicly avowing their concord, called forth bursts of thundering acclaim from the Crusading host at many miles' distance, and made the roving Arab scouts of the desert alarm the camp of Saladin with intelligence that the army of the Christians was in motion. Yet who but the King of Kings can read the hearts of monarchs? Under this smooth show of courtesy, Richard nourished displeasure and suspicion against Philip, and Philip meditated withdrawing himself and his host from the army of the Cross, and leaving Richard to accomplish or fail in the enterprise with his own unassisted forces.

Richard's demeanour was different when the dark-armed knights and squires of the Temple chivalry approached — men with countenances bronzed to Asiatic blackness by the suns of Palestine, and the admirable state of whose horses and appointments far surpassed even that of the choicest troops of France and England. The King cast a hasty glance aside, but the Nubian stood quiet, and his trusty dog sat at his feet, watching, with a sagacious yet pleased look, the ranks which now passed before them. The King's look turned again on the chivalrous Templars, as the Grand Master, availing himself of his mingled character, bestowed his benediction on Richard as a priest, instead of doing him reverence as a military leader.

'The misproud and amphibious caitiff puts the monk upon me,' said Richard to the Earl of Salisbury. 'But, Longsword, we will let it pass. A punctilio must not lose Christendom the services of these experienced lances, because their victories have rendered them overweening. Lo you, here comes our valiant adversary, the Duke of Austria; mark his manner and bearing, Longsword; and thou, Nubian, let the hound have full view of him. By Heaven, he brings his buffoons along with him!'

In fact, whether from habit, or, which is more likely, to intimate contempt of the ceremonial he was about to comply with, Leopold was attended by his *spruchsprecher* and his jester, and, as he advanced towards Richard, he whistled in what he wished to be considered as an indifferent manner, though his heavy features evinced the sullenness, mixed with the fear, with which a truant schoolboy may be seen to approach his master. As the reluctant dignitary made, with discomposed and sulky look, the obeisance required, the *spruchsprecher* shook his baton, and proclaimed, like a herald, that, in what he was now doing, the Archduke of Austria was not to be held derogating from the rank and privileges of a sovereign prince, to which the jester answered with a sonorous 'amen,' which provoked much laughter among the bystanders.

King Richard looked more than once at the Nubian and his dog; but the former moved not, nor did the latter strain at the leash, so that Richard said to the slave with some scorn, 'Thy success in this enterprise, my sable friend, even though thou hast brought thy hound's sagacity to back thine own, will not, I fear, place thee high in the rank of wizards, or much augment thy merits towards our person.'

The Nubian answered, as usual, only by a lowly obeisance.

Meantime the troops of the Marquis of Montserrat next passed in order before the King of England. That powerful and wily baron, to make the greater display of his forces, had divided them into two bodies. At the head of the first, consisting of his vassals and followers, and levied from his Syrian possessions, came his brother Enguerrand, and he himself followed, leading on a gallant band of twelve hundred Stradiots, a kind of light cavalry raised by the Venetians in their Dalmatian possessions, and of which they had entrusted the command to the Marquis, with whom the republic had many bonds of connexion. These Stradiots were clothed in a fashion partly European, but partaking chiefly of the Eastern fashion. They wore, indeed, short hauberks, but had over them parti-

coloured tunics of rich stuffs, with large wide pantaloons and half-boots. On their heads were straight upright caps, similar to those of the Greeks, and they carried small round targets, bows and arrows, scimitars, and poniards. They were mounted on horses, carefully selected, and well maintained at the expense of the state of Venice; their saddles and appointments resembled those of the Turks, and they rode in the same manner, with short stirrups and upon a high seat. These troops were of great use in skirmishing with the Arabs, though unable to engage in close combat, like the iron-sheathed men-at-arms of Western and Northern Europe.

Before this goodly band came Conrade, in the same garb with the Stradiots, but of such rich stuff that he seemed to blaze with gold and silver, and the milk-white plume fastened in his cap by a clasp of diamonds seemed tall enough to sweep the clouds. The noble steed which he reined bounded and caracoled, and displayed his spirit and agility in a manner which might have troubled a less admirable horseman than the Marquis, who gracefully ruled him with the one hand, while the other displayed the baton, whose predominancy over the ranks which he led seemed equally absolute. Yet his authority over the Stradiots was more in show than in substance; for there paced beside him, on an ambling palfrey of soberest mood, a little old man, dressed entirely in black, without beard or mustachios, and having an appearance altogether mean and insignificant, when compared with the blaze of splendour around him. But this mean-looking old man was one of those deputies whom the Venetian government sent into camps to overlook the conduct of the generals to whom the leading was consigned, and to maintain that jealous system of espial and control which had long distinguished the policy of the republic.

Conrade, who, by cultivating Richard's humour, had attained a certain degree of favour with him, no sooner was come within his ken than the King of England descended a step or two to meet him, exclaiming, at the same time, 'Ha, Lord Marquis, thou at the head of the fleet Stradiots, and thy black shadow attending thee as usual, whether the sun shines or not! May not one ask thee whether the rule of the troops remains with the shadow or the substance?'

Conrade was commencing his reply with a smile, when Roswal, the noble hound, uttering a furious and savage yell, sprung forward. The Nubian, at the same time, slipped the

leash, and the hound, rushing on, leapt upon Conrade's noble charger, and seizing the Marquis by the throat, pulled him down from the saddle. The plumed rider lay rolling on the sand, and the frightened horse fled in wild career through the camp.

'Thy hound hath pulled down the right quarry, I warrant him,' said the King to the Nubian, 'and I vow to St. George he is a stag of ten tynes. Pluck the dog off, lest he throttle him.'

The Ethiopian accordingly, though not without difficulty, disengaged the dog from Conrade, and fastened him up, still highly excited and struggling in the leash. Meanwhile, many crowded to the spot, especially followers of Conrade and officers of the Stradiots, who, as they saw their leader lie gazing wildly on the sky, raised him up amid a tumultuary cry of 'Cut the slave and his hound to pieces!'

But the voice of Richard, loud and sonorous, was heard clear above all other exclamations. 'He dies the death who injures the hound. He hath but done his duty, after the sagacity with which God and nature have endowed the brave animal. Stand forward for a false traitor, thou, Conrade Marquis of Montserrat. I impeach thee of treason.'

Several of the Syrian leaders had now come up, and Conrade, vexation, and shame, and confusion struggling with passion in his manner and voice, exclaimed, 'What means this? With what am I charged? Why this base usage and these reproachful terms? Is this the league of concord which England renewed but so lately?'

'Are the princes of the Crusade turned hares or deers in the eyes of King Richard, that he should slip hounds on them?' said the sepulchral voice of the Grand Master of the Templars.

'It must be some singular accident—some fatal mistake,' said Philip of France, who rode up at the same moment.

'Some deceit of the Enemy,' said the Archbishop of Tyre.

'A stratagem of the Saracens,' cried Henry of Champagne. 'It were well to hang up the dog, and put the slave to the torture.'

'Let no man lay hand upon them,' said Richard, 'as he loves his own life. Conrade, stand forth, if thou darest, and deny the accusation which this mute animal hath in his noble instinct brought against thee, of injury done to him and foul scorn to England?'

'I never touched the banner,' said Conrade, hastily.

'Thy words betray thee, Conrade!' said Richard; 'for how didst thou know, save from conscious guilt, that the question is concerning the banner?'

'Hast thou then not kept the camp in turmoil on that and no other score?' answered Conrade; 'and dost thou impute to a prince and an ally a crime which, after all, was probably committed by some paltry felon for the sake of the gold thread? Or wouldst thou now impeach a confederate on the credit of a dog?'

By this time the alarm was becoming general, so that Philip of France interposed.

'Princes and nobles,' he said, 'you speak in presence of those whose swords will soon be at the throats of each other, if they hear their leaders at such terms together. In the name of Heaven, let us draw off, each his own troops, into their separate quarters, and ourselves meet an hour hence in the pavilion of council, to take some order in this new state of confusion.'

'Content,' said King Richard, 'though I should have liked to have interrogated that caitiff while his gay doublet was yet besmirched with sand. But the pleasure of France shall be ours in this matter.'

The leaders separated as was proposed, each prince placing himself at the head of his own forces; and then was heard on all sides the crying of war-cries, and the sounding of gathering notes upon bugles and trumpets, by which the different stragglers were summoned to their prince's banner; and the troops were shortly seen in motion, each taking different routes through the camp to their own quarters. But although any immediate act of violence was thus prevented, yet the accident which had taken place dwelt on every mind; and those foreigners, who had that morning hailed Richard as the worthiest to lead their army, now resumed their prejudices against his pride and intolerance, while the English, conceiving the honour of their country connected with the quarrel, of which various reports had gone about, considered the natives of other countries jealous of the fame of England and her king, and disposed to undermine it by the meanest arts of intrigue. Many and various were the rumours spread upon the occasion, and there was one which averred that the Queen and her ladies had been much alarmed by the tumult, and that one of them had swooned.



The council assembled at the appointed hour. Conrade had in the meanwhile laid aside his dishonoured dress, and with it the shame and confusion which, in spite of his talents and promptitude, had at first overwhelmed him, owing to the strangeness of the accident and suddenness of the accusation. He was now robed like a prince, and entered the council-chamber attended by the Archduke of Austria, the Grand Masters both of the Temple and of the Order of St. John, and several other potentates, who made a show of supporting him and defending his cause, chiefly perhaps from political motives, or because they themselves nourished a personal enmity against Richard.

This appearance of union in favour of Conrade was far from influencing the King of England. He entered the council with his usual indifference of manner, and in the same dress in which he had just alighted from horseback. He cast a careless and somewhat scornful glance on the leaders, who had with studied affectation arranged themselves around Conrade, as if owning his cause, and in the most direct terms charged Conrade of Montserrat with having stolen the banner of England, and wounded the faithful animal who stood in its defence.

Conrade arose boldly to answer, and in despite, as he expressed himself, of man and brute, king or dog, avouched his innocence of the crime charged.

‘Brother of England,’ said Philip, who willingly assumed the character of moderator of the assembly, ‘this is an unusual impeachment. We do not hear you avouch your own knowledge of this matter, farther than your belief resting upon the demeanour of this hound towards the Marquis of Montserrat. Surely the word of a knight and a prince should bear him out against the barking of a cur?’

‘Royal brother,’ returned Richard, ‘recollect that the Almighty, who gave the dog to be companion of our pleasures and our toils, hath invested him with a nature noble and incapable of deceit. He forgets neither friend nor foe, remembers, and with accuracy, both benefit and injury. He hath a share of man’s intelligence, but no share of man’s falsehood. You may bribe a soldier to slay a man with his sword, or a witness to take life by false accusation; but you cannot make a hound tear his benefactor: he is the friend of man, save when man justly incurs his enmity. Dress yonder Marquis in what peacock-robcs you will, disguise his appearance, alter his complexion with drugs and washes, hide him amidst an

hundred men ; I will yet pawn my sceptre that the hound detects him, and expresses his resentment, as you have this day beheld. This is no new incident, although a strange one. Murderers and robbers have been, ere now, convicted, and suffered death under such evidence, and men have said that the finger of God was in it. In thine own land, royal brother, and upon such an occasion, the matter was tried by a solemn duel betwixt the man and the dog, as appellant and defendant in a challenge of murder. The dog was victorious ; the man was punished, and the crime was confessed. Credit me, royal brother, that hidden crimes have often been brought to light by the testimony even of inanimate substances, not to mention animals far inferior in instinctive sagacity to the dog, who is the friend and companion of our race.'

'Such a duel there hath indeed been, royal brother,' answered Philip, 'and that in the reign of one of our predecessors, to whom God be gracious. But it was in the olden time, nor can we hold it a precedent fitting for this occasion. The defendant in that case was a private gentleman, of small rank or respect ; his offensive weapons were only a club, his defensive a leathern jerkin. But we cannot degrade a prince to the disgrace of using such rude arms, or to the ignominy of such a combat.'

'I never meant that you should,' said King Richard ; 'it were foul play to hazard the good hound's life against that of such a double-faced traitor as this Conrade hath proved himself. But there lies our own glove : we appeal him to the combat in respect of the evidence we brought forth against him. A king, at least, is more than the mate of a marquis.'

Conrade made no hasty effort to seize on the pledge which Richard cast into the middle of the assembly, and King Philip had time to reply, ere the Marquis made a motion to lift the glove.

'A king,' said he of France, 'is as much more than a match for the Marquis Conrade as a dog would be less. Royal Richard, this cannot be permitted. You are the leader of our expedition — the sword and buckler of Christendom.'

'I protest against such a combat,' said the Venetian *proveditore*, 'until the King of England shall have repaid the fifty thousand bezants which he is indebted to the republic. It is enough to be threatened with loss of our debt, should our debtor fall by the hands of the pagans, without the additional risk of his being slain in brawls amongst Christians concerning dogs and banners.'

‘And I,’ said William with the Long Sword, Earl of Salisbury, ‘protest in my turn against my royal brother perilling his life, which is the property of the people of England, in such a cause. Here, noble brother, receive back your glove, and think only as if the wind had blown it from your hand. Mine shall lie in its stead. A king’s son, though with the bar sinister on his shield, is at least a match for this marmoset of a marquis.’

‘Princes and nobles,’ said Conrade, ‘I will not accept of King Richard’s defiance. He hath been chosen our leader against the Saracens, and if *his* conscience can answer the accusation of provoking an ally to the field on a quarrel so frivolous, *mine*, at least, cannot endure the reproach of accepting it. But touching his bastard brother, William of Woodstock, or against any other who shall adopt, or shall dare to stand godfather to, this most false charge, I will defend my honour in the lists, and prove whoever impeaches it a false liar.’

‘The Marquis of Montserrat,’ said the Archbishop of Tyre, ‘hath spoken like a wise and moderate gentleman ; and methinks this controversy might, without dishonour to any party, end at this point.’

‘Methinks it might so terminate,’ said the King of France, ‘provided King Richard will recall his accusation, as made upon over-slight grounds.’

‘Philip of France,’ answered Cœur-de-Lion, ‘my words shall never do my thoughts so much injury. I have charged yonder Conrade as a thief, who, under cloud of night, stole from its place the emblem of England’s dignity. I still believe and charge him to be such ; and when a day is appointed for the combat, doubt not that, since Conrade declines to meet us in person, I will find a champion to appear in support of my challenge ; for thou, William, must not thrust thy long sword into this quarrel without our special license.’

‘Since my rank makes me arbiter in this most unhappy matter,’ said Philip of France, ‘I appoint the fifth day from hence for the decision thereof, by way of combat, according to knightly usage — Richard King of England to appear by his champion as appellant, and Conrade Marquis of Montserrat in his own person as defendant. Yet I own, I know not where to find neutral ground where such a quarrel may be fought out ; for it must not be in the neighbourhood of this camp, where the soldiers would make faction on the different sides.’

‘It were well,’ said Richard, ‘to apply to the generosity of

the royal Saladin, since, heathen as he is, I have never known knight more fulfilled of nobleness, or to whose good faith we may so peremptorily entrust ourselves. I speak thus for those who may be doubtful of mishap; for myself, wherever I see my foe, I make that spot my battle-ground.'

'Be it so,' said Philip; 'we will make this matter known to Saladin, although it be showing to an enemy the unhappy spirit of discord which we would willingly hide from even ourselves, were it possible. Meanwhile, I dismiss this assembly, and charge you all, as Christian men and noble knights, that ye let this unhappy feud breed no farther brawling in the camp, but regard it as a thing solemnly referred to the judgment of God, to whom each of you should pray that He will dispose of victory in the combat according to the truth of the quarrel; and therewith may His will be done!'

'Amen — amen!' was answered on all sides; while the Templar whispered the Marquis, 'Conrade, wilt thou not add a petition to be delivered from the power of the dog, as the Psalmist hath it?'

'Peace, thou ——!' replied the Marquis; 'there is a revealing demon abroad, which may report, amongst other tidings, how far thou dost carry the motto of thy order — *Feriatur leo*.'

'Thou wilt stand the brunt of challenge?' said the Templar.

'Doubt me not,' said Conrade. 'I would not, indeed, have willingly met the iron arm of Richard himself, and I shame not to confess that I rejoice to be free of his encounter. But, from his bastard brother downward, the man breathes not in his ranks whom I fear to meet.'

'It is well you are so confident,' continued the Templar; 'and in that case the fangs of yonder hound have done more to dissolve this league of princes than either thy devices or the dagger of the Charegite. Seest thou how, under a brow studiously overclouded, Philip cannot conceal the satisfaction which he feels at the prospect of release from the alliance which sat so heavy on him? Mark how Henry of Champagne smiles to himself, like a sparkling goblet of his own wine; and see the chuckling delight of Austria, who thinks his quarrel is about to be avenged, without risk or trouble of his own. Hush, he approaches. A most grievous chance, most royal Austria, that these breaches in the walls of our Zion ——'

'If thou meanest this Crusade,' replied the Duke, 'I would it were crumbled to pieces, and each were safe at home! I speak this in confidence.'

‘But,’ said the Marquis of Montserrat, ‘to think this disunion should be made by the hands of King Richard, for whose pleasure we have been contented to endure so much, and to whom we have been as submissive as slaves to a master, in hopes that he would use his valour against our enemies, instead of exercising it upon our friends!’

‘I see not that he is so much more valorous than others,’ said the Archduke. ‘I believe, had the noble Marquis met him in the lists, he would have had the better; for, though the islander deals heavy blows with the pole-axe, he is not so very dexterous with the lance. I should have cared little to have met him myself on our old quarrel, had the weal of Christendom permitted to sovereign princes to breathe themselves in the lists. And if thou desirest it, noble Marquis, I will myself be your godfather in this combat.’

‘And I also,’ said the Grand Master.

‘Come, then, and take your nooning in our tent, noble sirs,’ said the Duke, ‘and we’ll speak of this business over some right Nierenstein.’

They entered together accordingly.

‘What said our patron and these great folks together?’ said Jonas Schwanker to his companion, the *spruchspracher*, who had used the freedom to press nigh to his master when the council was dismissed, while the jester waited at a more respectful distance.

‘Servant of folly,’ said the *spruchspracher*, ‘moderate thy curiosity; it beseems not that I should tell to thee the counsels of our master.’

‘Man of wisdom, you mistake,’ answered Jonas: ‘we are both the constant attendants on our patron, and it concerns us alike to know whether thou or I — wisdom or folly — have the deeper interest in him.’

‘He told to the Marquis,’ answered the *spruchspracher*, ‘and to the Grand Master, that he was aweary of these wars, and would be glad he was safe at home.’

‘That is a drawn cast, and counts for nothing in the game,’ said the jester; ‘it was most wise to think thus, but great folly to tell it to others. Proceed.’

‘Ha, hem!’ said the *spruchspracher*; ‘he next said to them, that Richard was not more valorous than others, or over-dexterous in the tilt-yard.’

‘Woodcock of my side,’ said Schwanker; ‘this was egregious folly. What next?’



‘Nay, I am something oblivious,’ replied the man of wisdom ; ‘he invited them to a goblet of Nierenstein.’

‘That hath a show of wisdom in it,’ said Jonas, ‘thou may’st mark it to thy credit in the meantime ; but an he drink too much, as is most likely, I will have it pass to mine. Anything more ?’

‘Nothing worth memory,’ answered the orator, ‘only he wished he had taken the occasion to meet Richard in the lists.’

‘Out upon it—out upon it!’ said Jonas ; ‘this is such dotage of folly, that I am wellnigh ashamed of winning the game by it. Ne’ertheless, fool as he is, we will follow him, most sage *spruchsprecher*, and have our share of the wine of Nierenstein.’

## CHAPTER XXV

Yet this inconstancy is such  
As thou, too, shalt adore ;  
I could not love thee, love, so much  
Loved I not honour more.

MONTROSE'S *Lines*.<sup>1</sup>

WHEN King Richard returned to his tent, he commanded the Nubian to be brought before him. He entered with his usual ceremonial reverence, and, having prostrated himself, remained standing before the King, in the attitude of a slave awaiting the orders of his master. It was perhaps well for him that the preservation of his character required his eyes to be fixed on the ground, since the keen glance with which Richard for some time surveyed him in silence would, if fully encountered, have been difficult to sustain.

'Thou canst well of woodcraft,' said the King, after a pause, 'and hast started thy game and brought him to bay as ably as if Tristrem<sup>2</sup> himself had taught thee. But this is not all : he must be brought down at force. I myself would have liked to have levelled my hunting-spear at him. There are, it seems, respects which prevent this. Thou art about to return to the camp of the Soldan, bearing a letter, requiring of his courtesy to appoint neutral ground for the deed of chivalry, and, should it consist with his pleasure, to concur with us in witnessing it. Now, speaking conjecturally, we think thou might'st find in that camp some cavalier who, for the love of truth and his own augmentation of honour, will do battle with this same traitor of Montserrat ?'

The Nubian raised his eyes and fixed them on the King with a look of eager ardour ; then raised them to Heaven with such solemn gratitude, that the water soon glistened in them ; then bent his head, as affirming what Richard desired, and resumed his usual posture of submissive attention.

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<sup>1</sup> See Note 9.

<sup>2</sup> See Sir Tristrem. Note 10.

‘It is well,’ said the King; ‘and I see thy desire to oblige me in this matter. And herein, I must needs say, lies the excellence of such a servant as thou, who hast not speech either to debate our purpose or to require explanation of what we have determined. An English serving-man, in thy place, had given me his dogged advice to trust the combat with some good lance of my household, who, from my brother Longsword downwards, are all on fire to do battle in my cause; and a chattering Frenchman had made a thousand attempts to discover wherefore I look for a champion from the camp of the infidels. But thou, my silent agent, canst do mine errand without questioning or comprehending it: with thee to hear is to obey.’

A bend of the body, and a genuflection, were the appropriate answer of the Ethiopian to these observations.

‘And now to another point,’ said the King, and speaking suddenly and rapidly. ‘Have you yet seen Edith Plantagenet?’

The mute looked up as in the act of being about to speak — nay, his lips had begun to utter a distinct negative — when the abortive attempt died away in the imperfect murmurs of the dumb.

‘Why, lo you there!’ said the King. ‘The very sound of the name of a royal maiden, of beauty so surpassing as that of our lovely cousin, seems to have power enough wellnigh to make the dumb speak! What miracles then might her eye work upon such a subject! I will make the experiment, friend slave. Thou shalt see this choice beauty of our court, and do the errand of the princely Soldan.’

Again a joyful glance, again a genuflection; but, as he arose, the King laid his hand heavily on his shoulder, and proceeded with stern gravity thus: ‘Let me in one thing warn you, my sable envoy. Even if thou shouldst feel that the kindly influence of her whom thou art soon to behold should loosen the bonds of thy tongue, presently imprisoned, as the good Soldan expresses it, within the ivory walls of its castle, beware how thou changest thy taciturn character, or speakest a word in her presence, even if thy powers of utterance were to be miraculously restored. Believe me, that I should have thy tongue extracted by the roots, and its ivory palace, that is, I presume, its range of teeth, drawn out one by one. Wherefore, be wise and silent still.’

The Nubian, so soon as the King had removed his heavy grasp from his shoulder, bent his head, and laid his hand on his lips, in token of silent obedience.

But Richard again laid his hand on him more gently, and added, 'This behest we lay on thee as on a slave. Wert thou knight and gentleman, we would require thine honour in pledge of thy silence, which is one especial condition of our present trust.'

The Ethiopian raised his body proudly, looked full at the King, and laid his right hand on his heart.

Richard then summoned his chamberlain.

'Go, Neville,' he said, 'with this slave, to the tent of our royal consort, and say it is our pleasure that he have an audience — a private audience — of our cousin Edith. He is charged with a commission to her. Thou canst show him the way also, in case he requires thy guidance, though thou may'st have observed it is wonderful how familiar he already seems to be with the purlieus of our camp. And thou, too, friend Ethiop,' the King continued, 'what thou dost, do quickly, and return hither within the half-hour.'

'I stand discovered,' thought the seeming Nubian, as, with downcast looks and folded arms, he followed the hasty stride of Neville towards the tent of Queen Berengaria — 'I stand undoubtedly discovered and unfolded to King Richard; yet I cannot perceive that his resentment is hot against me. If I understand his words, and surely it is impossible to misinterpret them, he gives me a noble chance of redeeming my honour upon the crest of this false marquis, whose guilt I read in his craven eye and quivering lip, when the charge was made against him. Roswal, faithfully hast thou served thy master, and most dearly shall thy wrong be avenged! But what is the meaning of my present permission to look upon her whom I had despaired ever to see again? And why or how can the royal Plantagenet consent that I should see his divine kinswoman, either as the messenger of the heathen Saladin or as the guilty exile whom he so lately expelled from his camp, his audacious avowal of the affection which is his pride being the greatest enhancement of his guilt? That Richard should consent to her receiving a letter from an infidel lover, [and] by the hands of one of such disproportioned rank, are either of them circumstances equally incredible, and, at the same time, inconsistent with each other. But Richard, when unmoved by his heady passions, is liberal, generous, and truly noble, and as such I will deal with him, and act according to his instructions, direct or implied, seeking to know no more than may gradually unfold itself without my officious inquiry. To him who has

given me so brave an opportunity to vindicate my tarnished honour I owe acquiescence and obedience, and, painful as it may be, the debt shall be paid. And yet' — thus the proud swelling of his heart farther suggested — 'Cœur-de-Lion, as he is called, might have measured the feelings of others by his own. I urge an address to his kinswoman! *I*, who never spoke word to her when I took a royal prize from her hand, when I was accounted not the lowest in feats of chivalry among the defenders of the Cross! *I* approach her when in a base disguise, and in a servile habit, and, alas! when my actual condition is that of a slave, with a spot of dishonour on that which was once my shield! *I* do this! He little knows me. Yet I thank him for the opportunity which may make us all better acquainted with each other.'

As he arrived at this conclusion, they paused before the entrance of the Queen's pavilion.

They were of course admitted by the guards, and Neville, leaving the Nubian in a small apartment or ante-chamber, which was but too well remembered by him, passed into that which was used as the Queen's presence-chamber. He communicated his royal master's pleasure in a low and respectful tone of voice, very different from the bluntness of Thomas de Vaux, to whom Richard was everything, and the rest of the court, including Berengaria herself, was nothing. A burst of laughter followed the communication of his errand.

'And what like is the Nubian slave, who comes ambassador on such an errand from the Soldan — a negro, De Neville, is he not?' said a female voice, easily recognised for that of Berengaria. 'A negro, is he not, De Neville, with black skin, a head curled like a ram's, a flat nose, and blubber lips — ha, worthy Sir Henry?'

'Let not your Grace forget the shin-bones,' said another voice, 'bent outwards like the edge of a Saracen scimitar.'

'Rather like the bow of a Cupid, since he comes upon a lover's errand,' said the Queen. 'Gentle Neville, thou art ever prompt to pleasure us poor women, who have so little to pass away our idle moments. We must see this messenger of love. Turks and Moors have I seen many, but negro never.'

'I am created to obey your Grace's commands, so you will bear me out with my sovereign for doing so,' answered the debonair knight. 'Yet, let me assure your Grace, you will see somewhat different from what you expect.'

'So much the better: uglier yet than our imaginations



can fancy, yet the chosen love-messenger of this gallant Soldan !’

‘Gracious madam,’ said the Lady Calista, ‘may I implore you would permit the good knight to carry this messenger straight to the Lady Edith, to whom his credentials are addressed ? We have already escaped hardly for such a frolic.’

‘Escaped !’ repeated the Queen, scornfully. ‘Yet thou mayst be right, Calista, in thy caution ; let this Nubian, as thou callest him, first do his errand to our cousin. Besides, he is mute too, is he not ?’

‘He is, gracious madam,’ answered the knight.

‘Royal sport have these Eastern ladies,’ said Berengaria, ‘attended by those before whom they may say anything, yet who can report nothing ; whereas in our camp, as the prelate of St. Jude’s is wont to say, a bird of the air will carry the matter.’

‘Because,’ said De Neville, ‘your Grace forgets that you speak within canvas walls.’

The voices sunk on this observation, and, after a little whispering, the English knight again returned to the Ethiopian, and made him a sign to follow. He did so, and Neville conducted him to a pavilion, pitched somewhat apart from that of the Queen, for the accommodation, it seemed, of the Lady Edith and her attendants. One of her Coptic maidens received the message communicated by Sir Henry Neville, and, in the space of a very few minutes, the Nubian was ushered into Edith’s presence, while Neville was left on the outside of the tent. The slave who introduced him withdrew on a signal from her mistress, and it was with humiliation, not of the posture only but of the very inmost soul, that the unfortunate knight, thus strangely disguised, threw himself on one knee, with looks bent on the ground, and arms folded on his bosom, like a criminal who expects his doom. Edith was clad in the same manner as when she received King Richard, her long transparent dark veil hanging around her like the shade of a summer night on a beautiful landscape, disguising and rendering obscure the beauties which it could not hide. She held in her hand a silver lamp, fed with some aromatic spirit, which burned with unusual brightness.

When Edith came within a step of the kneeling and motionless slave, she held the light towards his face, as if to peruse his features more attentively, then turned from him, and placed her lamp so as to throw the shadow of his face in profile upon the

curtain which hung beside. She at length spoke in a voice composed, yet deeply sorrowful.

‘Is it you? Is it indeed you, brave Knight of the Leopard — gallant Sir Kenneth of Scotland — is it indeed you — thus servilely disguised — thus surrounded by an hundred dangers?’

At hearing the tones of his lady’s voice thus unexpectedly addressed to him, and in a tone of compassion approaching to tenderness, a corresponding reply rushed to the knight’s lips, and scarce could Richard’s commands, and his own promised silence, prevent his answering, that the sight he saw, the sounds he just heard, were sufficient to recompense the slavery of a life, and dangers which threatened that life every hour. He *did* recollect himself, however, and a deep and impassioned sigh was his only reply to the high-born Edith’s question.

‘I see — I know I have guessed right,’ continued Edith. ‘I marked you from your first appearance near the platform on which I stood with the Queen. I knew, too, your valiant hound. She is no true lady, and is unworthy of the service of such a knight as thou art, from whom disguises of dress or hue could conceal a faithful servant. Speak, then, without fear, to Edith Plantagenet. She knows how to grace in adversity the good knight who served, honoured, and did deeds of arms in her name when fortune befriended him. Still silent! Is it fear or shame that keeps thee so? Fear should be unknown to thee; and for shame, let it remain with those who have wronged thee.’

The knight, in despair at being obliged to play the mute in an interview so interesting, could only express his mortification by sighing deeply, and laying his finger upon his lips. Edith stepped back as if somewhat displeased.

‘What!’ she said, ‘the Asiatic mute in very deed, as well as in attire? This I looked not for. Or thou may’st scorn me, perhaps, for thus boldly acknowledging that I have heedfully observed the homage thou hast paid me? Hold no unworthy thoughts of Edith on that account. She knows well the bounds which reserve and modesty prescribe to high-born maidens, and she knows when and how far they should give place to gratitude — to a sincere desire that it were in her power to repay services and repair injuries arising from the devotion which a good knight bore towards her. Why fold thy hands together, and wring them with so much passion? Can it be,’ she added, shrinking back at the idea, ‘that their cruelty has actually deprived thee of speech? Thou shakest thy head. Be it a spell,

be it obstinacy, I question thee no farther, but leave thee to do thine errand after thine own fashion. I also can be mute.'

The disguised knight made an action as if at once lamenting his own condition and deprecating her displeasure, while at the same time he presented to her, wrapped, as usual, in fine silk and cloth of gold, the letter of the Soldan. She took it, surveyed it carelessly, then laid it aside, and bending her eyes once more on the knight, she said in a low tone, 'Not even a word to do thine errand to me?'

He pressed both his hands to his brow, as if to intimate the pain which he felt at being unable to obey her; but she turned from him in anger.

'Begone!' she said. 'I have spoken enough — too much — to one who will not waste on me a word in reply. Begone! and say, if I have wronged thee, I have done penance; for if I have been the unhappy means of dragging thee down from a station of honour, I have, in this interview, forgotten my own worth and lowered myself in thy eyes and in my own.'

She covered her eyes with her hand, and seemed deeply agitated. Sir Kenneth would have approached, but she waved him back.

'Stand off! thou whose soul Heaven hath suited to its new station! Aught less dull and fearful than a slavish mute had spoken a word of gratitude, were it but to reconcile me to my own degradation. Why pause you? Begone!'

The disguised knight almost involuntarily looked towards the letter as an apology for protracting his stay. She snatched it up, saying, in a tone of irony and contempt, 'I had forgotten — the dutiful slave waits an answer to his message. How's this — from the Soldan!'

She hastily ran over the contents, which were expressed both in Arabic and French, and when she had done, she laughed in bitter anger.

'Now this passes imagination,' she said: 'no jongleur can show so deft a transmutation. His legerdemain can transform zechins and bezants into doits and maravedies; but can his art convert a Christian knight, ever esteemed among the bravest of the Holy Crusade, into the dust-kissing slave of a heathen Soldan — the bearer of a paynim's insolent proposals to a Christian maiden — nay, forgetting the laws of honourable chivalry, as well as of religion? But it avails not talking to the willing slave of a heathen hound. Tell your master, when his scourge shall have found thee a tongue, that which thou

hast seen me do.' So saying, she threw the Soldan's letter on the ground, and placed her foot upon it. 'And say to him, that Edith Plantagenet scorns the homage of an unchristened pagan.'

With these words she was about to shoot from the knight, when, kneeling at her feet in bitter agony, he ventured to lay his hand upon her robe and oppose her departure.

'Heardst thou not what I said, dull slave?' she said, turning short round on him, and speaking with emphasis: 'tell the heathen Soldan, thy master, that I scorn his suit as much as I despise the prostration of a worthless renegade to religion and chivalry — to God and to his lady!'

So saying, she burst from him, tore her garment from his grasp, and left the tent.

The voice of Neville, at the same time, summoned him from without. Exhausted and stupified by the distress he had undergone during this interview, from which he could only have extricated himself by breach of the engagement which he had formed with King Richard, the unfortunate knight staggered rather than walked after the English baron, till they reached the royal pavilion, before which a party of horsemen had just dismounted. There was light and motion within the tent, and when Neville entered with his disguised attendant, they found the King, with several of his nobility, engaged in welcoming those who were newly arrived.

## CHAPTER XXVI

The tears I shed must ever fall !  
I weep not for an absent swain ;  
For time may happier hours recall,  
And parted lovers meet again.

I weep not for the silent dead ;  
Their pains are past, their sorrows o'er,  
And those that loved their steps must tread,  
When death shall join to part no more.

But worse than absence, worse than death,  
She wept her lover's sullied fame,  
And, fired with all the pride of birth,  
She wept a soldier's injured name.<sup>1</sup>

*Ballad.*

THE frank and bold voice of Richard was heard in joyous gratulation.

‘Thomas de Vaux ! — stout Tom of the Gills ! by the head of King Henry, thou art welcome to me as ever was flask of wine to a jolly toper ! I should scarce have known how to order my battle array, unless I had thy bulky form in mine eye as a landmark to form my ranks upon. We shall have blows anon, Thomas, if the saints be gracious to us ; and had we fought in thine absence, I would have looked to hear of thy being found hanging upon an elder-tree.’

‘I should have borne my disappointment with more Christian patience, I trust,’ said Thomas de Vaux, ‘than to have died the death of an apostate. But I thank your Grace for my welcome, which is the more generous, as it respects a banquet of blows, of which, saving your pleasure, you are ever too apt to engross the larger share ; but here have I brought one to whom your Grace will, I know, give a yet warmer welcome.’

The person who now stepped forward to make obeisance to

<sup>1</sup> The last four lines of this ballad are by the Author himself, and the previous lines from ‘The Song of Genius,’ by Helen D’Arcy Cranstoun, afterwards Mrs. Dugald Stewart (*Laing*).



Richard was a young man of low stature and slight form. His dress was as modest as his figure was unimpressive ; but he bore on his bonnet a gold buckle, with a gem the lustre of which could only be rivalled by the brilliancy of the eye which the bonnet shaded. It was the only striking feature in his countenance ; but when once noticed, it ever made a strong impression on the spectator. About his neck there hung in a scarf of sky-blue silk a 'wrest,' as it was called — that is, the key with which a harp is tuned, and which was of solid gold.

This personage would have kneeled reverently to Richard, but the monarch raised him in joyful haste, pressed him to his bosom warmly, and kissed him on either side of the face.

'Blondel de Nesle !' he exclaimed, joyfully ; 'welcome from Cyprus, my king of minstrels ! — welcome to the King of England, who rates not his own dignity more highly than he does thine. I have been sick, man, and, by my soul, I believe it was for lack of thee ; for, were I half-way to the gate of Heaven, methinks thy strains could call me back. And what news, my gentle master, from the land of the lyre ? Anything fresh from the *trouveurs* of Provence — anything from the minstrels of merry Normandy — above all, hast thou thyself been busy ? But I need not ask thee — thou canst not be idle, if thou wouldst : thy noble qualities are like a fire burning within, and compel thee to pour thyself out in music and song.'

'Something I have learned, and something I have done, noble king,' answered the celebrated Blondel, with a retiring modesty which all Richard's enthusiastic admiration of his skill had been unable to banish.

'We will hear thee, man — we will hear thee instantly,' said the King ; then touching Blondel's shoulder kindly, he added, 'That is, if thou art not fatigued with thy journey ; for I would sooner ride my best horse to death than injure a note of thy voice.'

'My voice is, as ever, at the service of my royal patron,' said Blondel ; 'but your Majesty,' he added, looking at some papers on the table, 'seems more importantly engaged, and the hour waxes late.'

'Not a whit, man — not a whit, my dearest Blondel. I did but sketch an array of battle against the Saracens — a thing of a moment, almost as soon done as the routing of them.'

'Methinks, however,' said Thomas de Vaux, 'it were not unfit to inquire what soldiers your Grace hath to array. I bring reports on that subject from Ascalon.'

'Thou art a mule, Thomas,' said the King — 'a very mule for dulness and obstinacy. Come, nobles — a hall — a hall! — range ye around him. Give Blondel the tabouret. Where is his harp-bearer? or, soft — lend him my harp, his own may be damaged by the journey.'

'I would your Grace would take my report,' said Thomas de Vaux. 'I have ridden far, and have more list to my bed than to have my ears tickled.'

'Thy ears tickled!' said the King; 'that must be with a woodcock's feather, and not with sweet sounds. Hark thee, Thomas, do thine ears know the singing of Blondel from the braying of an ass?'

'In faith, my liege,' replied Thomas, 'I cannot well say; but, setting Blondel out of the question, who is a born gentleman, and doubtless of high acquirements, I shall never, for the sake of your Grace's question, look on a minstrel but I shall think upon an ass.'

'And might not your manners,' said Richard, 'have excepted me, who am a gentleman born as well as Blondel, and, like him, a guild-brother of the *joyeuse science*?'

'Your Grace should remember,' said De Vaux, smiling, 'that 't is useless asking for manners from a mule.'

'Most truly spoken,' said the King; 'and an ill-conditioned animal thou art. But come hither, master mule, and be unloaded, that thou mayst get thee to thy litter, without any music being wasted on thee. Meantime, do thou, good brother of Salisbury, go to our consort's tent, and tell her that Blondel has arrived, with his budget fraught with the newest minstrelsy. Bid her come hither instantly, and do thou escort her, and see that our cousin, Edith Plantagenet, remain not behind.'

His eye then rested for a moment on the Nubian, with that expression of doubtful meaning which his countenance usually displayed when he looked at him.

'Ha, our silent and secret messenger returned? Stand up, slave, behind the back of De Neville, and thou shalt hear presently sounds which will make thee bless God that He afflicted thee rather with dumbness than deafness.'

So saying, he turned from the rest of the company towards De Vaux, and plunged instantly into the military details which that baron laid before him.

About the time that the Lord of Gilsland had finished his audience, a messenger announced that the Queen and her attendants were approaching the royal tent. 'A flask of wine,

ho!’ said the King — ‘of old King Isaac’s long-saved Cyprus, which we won when we stormed Famagosta; fill to the stout Lord of Gilsland, gentles — a more careful and faithful servant never had any prince.’

‘I am glad,’ said Thomas de Vaux, ‘that your Grace finds the mule a useful slave, though his voice be less musical than horse-hair or wire.’

‘What, thou canst not yet digest that quip of the mule?’ said Richard. ‘Wash it down with a brimming flagon, man, or thou wilt choke upon it. Why, so — well pulled! And now I will tell thee, thou art a soldier as well as I, and we must brook each other’s jests in the hall, as each other’s blows in the tourney, and love each other the harder we hit. By my faith, if thou didst not hit me as hard as I did thee in our late encounter, thou gavest all thy wit to the thrust. But here lies the difference betwixt thee and Blondel. Thou art but my comrade — I might say my pupil — in the art of war; Blondel is my master in the science of minstrelsy and music. To thee I permit the freedom of intimacy; to him I must do reverence, as to my superior in his art. Come, man, be not peevish, but remain and hear our glee.’

‘To see your Majesty in such cheerful mood,’ said the Lord of Gilsland, ‘by my faith, I could remain till Blondel had achieved the great romance of King Arthur, which lasts for three days.’

‘We will not tax your patience so deeply,’ said the King. ‘But see, yonder glare of torches without shows that our consort approaches. Away to receive her, man, and win thyself grace in the brightest eyes of Christendom. Nay, never stop to adjust thy cloak. See, thou hast let Neville come between the wind and the sails of thy galley!’

‘He was never before me in the field of battle,’ said De Vaux, not greatly pleased to see himself anticipated by the more active service of the chamberlain.

‘No, neither he nor any one went before thee there, my good Tom of the Gills,’ said the King, ‘unless it was ourself, now and then.’

‘Ay, my hege,’ said De Vaux, ‘and let us do justice to the unfortunate: the unhappy Knight of the Leopard hath been before me, too, at a season; for, look you, he weighs less on horseback, and so —’

‘Hush!’ said the King, interrupting him in a peremptory tone, ‘not a word of him!’ and instantly stepped forward to

greet his royal consort ; and when he had done so, he presented to her Blondel, as king of minstrelsy, and his master in the gay science. Berengaria, who well knew that her royal husband's passion for poetry and music almost equalled his appetite for warlike fame, and that Blondel was his especial favourite, took anxious care to receive him with all the flattering distinctions due to one whom the king delighted to honour. Yet it was evident that, though Blondel made suitable returns to the compliments showered on him something too abundantly by the royal beauty, he owned with deeper reverence and more humble gratitude the simple and graceful welcome of Edith, whose kindly greeting appeared to him, perhaps, sincere in proportion to its brevity and simplicity.

Both the Queen and her royal husband were aware of this distinction, and Richard, seeing his consort somewhat piqued at the preference assigned to his cousin, by which perhaps he himself did not feel much gratified, said in the hearing of both, 'We minstrels, Berengaria, as thou mayst see by the bearing of our master Blondel, pay more reverence to a severe judge like our kinswoman than to a kindly, partial friend like thyself, who is willing to take our worth upon trust.'

Edith was moved by this sarcasm of her royal kinsman, and hesitated not to reply, that, 'To be a harsh and severe judge was not an attribute proper to her alone of all the Plantagenets.'

She had perhaps said more, having some touch of the temper of that house, which, deriving their name and cognizance from the lowly broom (*Planta Genista*), assumed as an emblem of humility, were perhaps one of the proudest families that ever ruled in England ; but her eye, when kindling in her reply, suddenly caught those of the Nubian, although he endeavoured to conceal himself behind the nobles who were present, and she sunk upon a seat, turning so pale that the Queen Berengaria deemed herself obliged to call for water and essences, and to go through the other ceremonies appropriate to a lady's swoon. Richard, who better estimated Edith's strength of mind, called to Blondel to assume his seat and commence his lay, declaring that minstrelsy was worth every other recipe to recall a Plantagenet to life. 'Sing us,' he said, 'that song of the Bloody Vest, of which thou didst formerly give me the argument, ere I left Cyprus ; thou must be perfect in it by this time, or, as our yeomen say, thy bow is broken.'

The anxious eye of the minstrel, however, dwelt on Edith,

and it was not till he observed her returning colour that he obeyed the repeated commands of the King. Then, accompanying his voice with the harp, so as to grace, but yet not drown, the sense of what he sung, he chanted in a sort of recitative one of those ancient adventures of love and knighthood which were wont of yore to win the public attention. So soon as he began to prelude, the insignificance of his personal appearance seemed to disappear, and his countenance glowed with energy and inspiration. His full, manly, mellow voice, so absolutely under command of the purest taste, thrilled on every ear and to every heart. Richard, rejoiced as after victory, called out the appropriate summons for silence,

‘Listen, lords, in bower and hall’;

while, with the zeal of a patron at once and a pupil, he arranged the circle around, and hushed them into silence, and he himself sat down with an air of expectation and interest, not altogether unmixed with the gravity of the professed critic. The courtiers turned their eyes on the King, that they might be ready to trace and imitate the emotions his features should express, and Thomas de Vaux yawned tremendously, as one who submitted unwillingly to a wearisome penance. The song of Blondel was of course in the Norman language; but the verses which follow express its meaning and its manner.

#### THE BLOODY VEST

‘T was near the fair city of Benevent,  
When the sun was setting on bough and bent,  
And knights were preparing in bower and tent,  
On the eve of the Baptist’s tournament;  
When in Lincoln green a stripling gent,  
Well seeming a page by a princess sent,  
Wander’d the camp, and, still as he went,  
Enquired for the Englishman, Thomas a Kent.

Far hath he fared, and farther must fare,  
Till he finds his pavilion nor stately nor rare —  
Little save iron and steel was there;  
And, as lacking the coin to pay armourer’s care,  
With his sinewy arms to the shoulders bare,  
The good knight with hammer and file did repair  
The mail that to-morrow must see him wear,  
For the honour of St. John and his lady fair.

‘Thus speaks my lady,’ the page said he,  
And the knight bent lowly both head and knee,  
‘She is Benevent’s princess so high in degree,  
And thou art as lowly as knight may well be;



He that would climb so lofty a tree,  
Or spring such a gulf as divides her from thee,  
Must dare some high deed, by which all men may see  
His ambition is back'd by his hie chivalrie.

'Therefore thus speaks my lady,' the fair page he said,  
And the knight lowly louted with hand and with head,  
'Fling aside the good armour in which thou art clad,  
And don thou this weed of her night-gear instead,  
For a hauberk of steel, a kirtle of thread ;  
And charge, thus attired, in the tournament dread,  
And fight as thy wont is where most blood is shed,  
And bring honour away, or remain with the dead.'

Untroubled in his look and untroubled in his breast,  
The knight the weed hath taken and reverently hath kissed —  
'Now blessed be the moment, the messenger be blest !  
Much honour'd do I hold me in my lady's high behest ;  
And say unto my lady, in this dear night-weed dress'd,  
To the best-armed champion I will not veil my crest.  
But if I live and bear me well 't is her turn to take the test.'  
Here, gentles, ends the foremost fyfte of the Lay of the Bloody Vest.

'Thou hast changed the measure upon us unawares in that last couplet, my Blondel ?' said the King.

'Most true, my lord,' said Blondel. 'I rendered the verses from the Italian of an old harper whom I met in Cyprus, and not having had time either to translate it accurately or commit it to memory, I am fain to supply gaps in the music and the verse as I can upon the spur of the moment, as you see boors mend a quickset fence with a fagot.'

'Nay, on my faith,' said the King, 'I like these rattling rolling Alexandrines : methinks they come more twangingly off to the music than that briefer measure.'

'Both are licensed, as is well known to your Grace,' answered Blondel.

'They are so, Blondel,' said Richard ; 'yet methinks the scene, where there is like to be fighting, will go best on in these same thundering Alexandrines, which sound like the charge of cavalry ; while the other measure is but like the sidelong amble of a lady's palfrey.'

'It shall be as your Grace pleases,' replied Blondel, and began again to prelude.

'Nay, first cherish thy fancy with a cup of fiery Chios wine,' said the King ; 'and hark thee, I would have thee fling away that newfangled restriction of thine, of terminating in accurate and similar rhymes. They are a constraint on thy flow of fancy, and make thee resemble a man dancing in fetters.'

'The fetters are easily flung off, at least,' said Blondel, again sweeping his fingers over the strings, as one who would rather have played than listened to criticism.

'But why put them on, man?' continued the King. 'Wherefore thrust thy genius into iron bracelets? I marvel how you got forward at all: I am sure I should not have been able to compose a stanza in yonder hampered measure.'

Blondel looked down and busied himself with the strings of his harp, to hide an involuntary smile which crept over his features; but it escaped not Richard's observation.

'By my faith, thou laugh'st at me, Blondel,' he said; 'and, in good truth, every man deserves it who presumes to play the master when he should be the pupil; but we kings get bad habits of self-opinion. Come, on with thy lay, dearest Blondel — on after thine own fashion, better than aught that we can suggest, though we must needs be talking.'

Blondel resumed the lay; but, as extemporaneous composition was familiar to him, he failed not to comply with the King's hints, and was perhaps not displeased to show with how much ease he could new-model a poem even while in the act of recitation.

## THE BLOODY VEST

### FYTTE SECOND

The Baptist's fair morrow beheld gallant feats:  
There was winning of honour and losing of seats,  
There was hewing with falchions and splintering of staves;  
The victors won glory, the vanquished won graves.  
O, many a knight there fought bravely and well,  
Yet one was accounted his peers to excel,  
And 't was he whose sole armour on body and breast  
Seem'd the weed of a damsel when bound for her rest.

There were some dealt him wounds that were bloody and sore,  
But others respected his plight, and forbore.  
'It is some oath of honour,' they said, 'and I trow,  
'T were unknighly to slay him achieving his vow.'  
Then the prince, for his sake, bade the tournament cease:  
He flung down his warder, the trumpets sung peace;  
And the judges declare, and competitors yield,  
That the Knight of the Night-gear was first in the field.

The feast it was nigh, and the mass it was nigher,  
When before the fair princess low louted a squire,  
And deliver'd a garment unseemly to view,  
With sword-cut and spear-thrust all hack'd and pierced through,

All rent and all tatter'd, all clotted with blood,  
 With foam of the horses, with dust, and with mud.  
 Not the point of that lady's small finger, I ween,  
 Could have rested on spot was unsullied and clean.

'This token my master, Sir Thomas a Kent,  
 Restores to the princess of fair Benevent.  
 He that climbs the tall tree has won right to the fruit,  
 He that leaps the wide gulf should prevail in his suit:  
 Through life's utmost peril the prize I have won,  
 And now must the faith of my mistress be shown;  
 For she who prompts knights on such danger to run  
 Must avouch his true service in front of the sun.

' "I restore," says my master, "the garment I've worn,  
 And I claim of the princess to don it in turn;  
 For its stains and its rents she should prize it the more,  
 Since by shame 't is unsullied, though crimson'd with gore."  
 Then deep blush'd the princess; yet kiss'd she and press'd  
 The blood-spotted robes to her lips and her breast.  
 'Go tell my true knight, church and chamber shall show,  
 If I value the blood on this garment or no.'

And when it was time for the nobles to pass,  
 In solemn procession to minster and mass,  
 The first walk'd the princess in purple and pall,  
 But the blood-besmeared night-robe she wore over all;  
 And eke, in the hall, where they all sat at dine,  
 When she knelt to her father and proffered the wine,  
 Over all her rich robes and state jewels she wore  
 That wimple unseemly, bedabbled with gore.

Then lords whisper'd ladies, as well you may think,  
 And ladies replied, with nod, titter, and wink;  
 And the prince, who in anger and shame had look'd down,  
 Turn'd at length to his daughter, and spoke with a frown:  
 'Now since thou hast publish'd thy folly and guilt,  
 E'en atone with thy hand for the blood thou hast spilt;  
 Yet sore for your boldness you both will repent,  
 When you wander as exiles from fair Benevent.'

Then out spoke stout Thomas, in hall where he stood,  
 Exhausted and feeble, but dauntless of mood,  
 'The blood that I lost for this daughter of thine,  
 I pour'd forth as freely as flask gives its wine;  
 And if for my sake she brooks penance and blame,  
 Do not doubt I will save her from suffering and shame;  
 And light will she reckon of thy princedom and rent,  
 When I hail her, in England, the Countess of Kent!'

A murmur of applause ran through the assembly, following the example of Richard himself, who loaded with praises his favourite minstrel, and ended by presenting him with a ring of considerable value. The Queen hastened to distinguish the

favourite by a rich bracelet, and many of the nobles who were present followed the royal example.

‘Is our cousin Edith,’ said the King, ‘become insensible to the sound of the harp she once loved?’

‘She thanks Blondel for his lay,’ replied Edith, ‘but doubly the kindness of the kinsman who suggested it.’

‘Thou art angry, cousin,’ said the King — ‘angry because thou hast heard of a woman more wayward than thyself. But you escape me not : I will walk a space homeward with you towards the Queen’s pavilion ; we must have conference together ere the night has waned into morning.’

The Queen and her attendants were now on foot, and the other guests withdrew from the royal tent. A train with blazing torches, and an escort of archers, awaited Berengaria without the pavilion, and she was soon on her way homeward. Richard, as he had proposed, walked beside his kinswoman, and compelled her to accept of his arm as her support, so that they could speak to each other without being overheard.

‘What answer, then, am I to return to the noble Soldan?’ said Richard. ‘The kings and princes are falling from me, Edith : this new quarrel hath alienated them once more. I would do something for the Holy Sepulchre by composition, if not by victory ; and the chance of my doing this depends, alas ! on the caprice of a woman. I would lay my single spear in the rest against ten of the best lances in Christendom, rather than argue with a wilful wench, who knows not what is for her own good. What answer, coz, am I to return to the Soldan? It must be decisive.’

‘Tell him,’ said Edith, ‘that the poorest of the Plantagenets will rather wed with misery than with misbelief.’

‘Shall I say with *slavery*, Edith?’ said the King. ‘Methinks that is nearer thy thoughts.’

‘There is no room,’ said Edith, ‘for the suspicion you so grossly insinuate. Slavery of the body might have been pitied, but that of the soul is only to be despised. Shame to thee, king of Merry England ! Thou hast enthralled both the limbs and the spirit of a knight once scarce less famed than thyself.’

‘Should I not prevent my kinswoman from drinking poison, by sullying the vessel which contained it, if I saw no other means of disgusting her with the fatal liquor?’ replied the King.

‘It is thyself,’ answered Edith, ‘that would press me to drink poison, because it is proffered in a golden chalice.’

‘Edith,’ said Richard, ‘I cannot force thy resolution ; but beware you shut not the door which Heaven opens. The hermit of Engaddi, he whom Popes and councils have regarded as a prophet, hath read in the stars that thy marriage shall reconcile me with a powerful enemy, and that thy husband shall be Christian, leaving thus the fairest ground to hope that the conversion of the Soldan, and the bringing in of the sons of Ishmael to the pale of the church, will be the consequence of thy wedding with Saladin. Come, thou must make some sacrifice rather than mar such happy prospects.’

‘Men may sacrifice rams and goats,’ said Edith, ‘but not honour and conscience. I have heard that it was the dishonour of a Christian maiden which brought the Saracens into Spain ; the shame of another is no likely mode of expelling them from Palestine.’

‘Dost thou call it shame to become an empress ?’ said the King.

‘I call it shame and dishonour to profane a Christian sacrament by entering into it with an infidel whom it cannot bind ; and I call it foul dishonour that I, the descendant of a Christian princess, should become of free-will the head of a haram of heathen concubines.’

‘Well, kinswoman,’ said the King, after a pause, ‘I must not quarrel with thee, though I think thy dependent condition might have dictated more compliance.’

‘My liege,’ replied Edith, ‘your Grace hath worthily succeeded to all the wealth, dignity, and dominion of the house of Plantagenet ; do not, therefore, begrudge your poor kinswoman some small share of their pride.’

‘By my faith, wench,’ said the King, ‘thou hast unhorsed me with that very word ; so we will kiss and be friends. I will presently despatch thy answer to Saladin. But, after all, coz, were it not better to suspend your answer till you have seen him ? Men say he is pre-eminently handsome.’

‘There is no chance of our meeting, my lord,’ said Edith.

‘By St. George, but there is next to a certainty of it,’ said the King ; ‘for Saladin will doubtless afford us a free field for the doing of this new “battle of the standard,” and will witness it himself. Berengaria is wild to behold it also, and I dare be sworn not a feather of you, her companions and attendants, will remain behind—least of all thou thyself, fair coz. But come, we have reached the pavilion, and must part, not in unkindness though—nay, thou must seal it with thy lip as



well as thy hand, sweet Edith ; it is my right as a sovereign to kiss my pretty vassals.'

He embraced her respectfully and affectionately, and returned through the moonlight camp, humming to himself such snatches of Blondel's lay as he could recollect.

On his arrival, he lost no time in making up his despatches for Saladin, and delivered them to the Nubian, with a charge to set out by peep of day on his return to the Soldan.

## CHAPTER XXVII

We heard the tecbir, — so these Arabs call  
Their shout of onset, when, with loud acclaim,  
They challenge Heaven to give them victory.

*Siege of Damascus.*

ON the subsequent morning, Richard was invited to a conference by Philip of France, in which the latter, with many expressions of his high esteem for his brother of England, communicated to him, in terms extremely courteous, but too explicit to be misunderstood, his positive intention to return to Europe, and to the cares of his kingdom, as entirely despairing of future success in their undertaking, with their diminished forces and civil discords. Richard remonstrated, but in vain; and when the conference ended, he received without surprise a manifesto from the Duke of Austria and several other princes, announcing a resolution similar to that of Philip, and in no modified terms assigning for their defection from the cause of the Cross the inordinate ambition and arbitrary domination of Richard of England. All hopes of continuing the war with any prospect of ultimate success were now abandoned, and Richard, while he shed bitter tears over his disappointed hopes of glory, was little consoled by the recollection that the failure was in some degree to be imputed to the advantages which he had given his enemies by his own hasty and imprudent temper.

‘They had not dared to have deserted my father thus,’ he said to De Vaux, in the bitterness of his resentment. ‘No slanders they could have uttered against so wise a king would have been believed in Christendom; whereas — fool that I am! — I have not only afforded them a pretext for deserting me, but even a colour for casting all the blame of the rupture upon my unhappy foibles.’

These thoughts were so deeply galling to the King, that De Vaux was rejoiced when the arrival of an ambassador from Saladin turned his reflections into a different channel.

This new envoy was an emir much respected by the Soldan, whose name was Abdallah el Hadgi. He derived his descent from the family of the Prophet, and the race or tribe of Hashem, in witness of which genealogy he wore a green turban of large dimensions. He had also three times performed the journey to Mecca, from which he derived his epithet of El Hadgi, or the Pilgrim. Notwithstanding these various pretensions to sanctity, Abdallah was, for an Arab, a boon companion, who enjoyed a merry tale, and laid aside his gravity so far as to quaff a blythe flagon, when secrecy ensured him against scandal. He was likewise a statesman, whose abilities had been used by Saladin in various negotiations with the Christian princes, and particularly with Richard, to whom El Hadgi was personally known and acceptable. Animated by the cheerful acquiescence with which the envoy of Saladin afforded a fair field for the combat, a safe-conduct for all who might choose to witness it, and offered his own person as a guarantee of his fidelity, Richard soon forgot his disappointed hopes, and the approaching dissolution of the Christian league, in the interesting discussions preceding a combat in the lists.

The station called the Diamond of the Desert was assigned for the place of conflict, as being nearly at an equal distance betwixt the Christian and Saracen camps. It was agreed that Conrade of Montserrat, the defendant, with his godfathers, the Archduke of Austria and the Grand Master of the Templars, should appear there on the day fixed for the combat, with an hundred armed followers, and no more ; that Richard of England and his brother Salisbury, who supported the accusation, should attend with the same number, to protect his champion ; and that the Soldan should bring with him a guard of five hundred chosen followers, a band considered as not more than equal to the two hundred Christian lances. Such persons of consideration as either party chose to invite to witness the contest were to wear no other weapons than their swords, and to come without defensive armour. The Soldan undertook the preparation of the lists, and to provide accommodations and refreshments of every kind for all who were to assist at the solemnity ; and his letters expressed, with much courtesy, the pleasure which he anticipated in the prospect of a personal and peaceful meeting with the Melech Ric, and his anxious desire to render his reception as agreeable as possible.

All preliminaries being arranged, and communicated to the defendant and his godfathers, Abdallah the Hadgi was admitted

to a more private interview, where he heard with delight the strains of Blondel. Having first carefully put his green turban out of sight, and assumed a Greek cap in its stead, he requited the Norman minstrel's music with a drinking-song from the Persian, and quaffed a hearty flagon of Cyprus wine, to show that his practice matched his principles. On the next day, grave and sober as the water-drinker Mirglip, he bent his brow to the ground before Saladin's footstool, and rendered to the Soldan an account of his embassy.

On the day before that appointed for the combat, Conrade and his friends set off by daybreak to repair to the place assigned, and Richard left the camp at the same hour, and for the same purpose; but, as had been agreed upon, he took his journey by a different route—a precaution which had been judged necessary, to prevent the possibility of a quarrel betwixt their armed attendants.

The good King himself was in no humour for quarrelling with any one. Nothing could have added to his pleasurable anticipations of a desperate and bloody combat in the lists, except his being in his own royal person one of the combatants; and he was half in charity again even with Conrade of Montserrat. Lightly armed, richly dressed, and gay as a bridegroom on the eve of his nuptials, Richard caracoled along by the side of Queen Berengaria's litter, pointing out to her the various scenes through which they passed, and cheering with tale and song the bosom of the inhospitable wilderness. The former route of the Queen's pilgrimage to Engaddi had been on the other side of the chain of mountains, so that the ladies were strangers to the scenery of the desert; and though Berengaria knew her husband's disposition too well not to endeavour to seem interested in what he was pleased either to say or to sing, she could not help indulging some female fears when she found herself in the howling wilderness with so small an escort, which seemed almost like a moving speck on the bosom of the plain, and knew, at the same time, they were not so distant from the camp of Saladin but what they might be in a moment surprised and swept off by an overpowering host of his fiery-footed cavalry, should the pagan be faithless enough to embrace an opportunity thus tempting. But when she hinted these suspicions to Richard, he repelled them with displeasure and disdain. 'It were worse than ingratitude,' he said, 'to doubt the good faith of the generous Soldan.'

Yet the same doubts and fears recurred more than once, not

to the timid mind of the Queen alone, but to the firmer and more candid soul of Edith Plantagenet, who had no such confidence in the faith of the Moslem as to render her perfectly at ease when so much in their power ; and her surprise had been far less than her terror if the desert around had suddenly resounded with the shout of 'Alla hu !' and a band of Arab cavalry had pounced on them like vultures on their prey. Nor were these suspicions lessened when, as evening approached, they were aware of a single Arab horseman, distinguished by his turban and long lance, hovering on the edge of a small eminence like a hawk poised in the air, and who instantly, on the appearance of the royal retinue, darted off with the speed of the same bird when it shoots down the wind and disappears from the horizon.

'We must be near the station,' said King Richard ; 'and yonder cavalier is one of Saladin's outposts ; methinks I hear the noise of the Moorish horns and cymbals. Get you into order, my hearts, and form yourselves around the ladies soldier-like and firmly.'

As he spoke, each knight, squire, and archer hastily closed in upon his appointed ground, and they proceeded in the most compact order, which made their numbers appear still smaller ; and, to say the truth, though there might be no fear, there was anxiety as well as curiosity, in the attention with which they listened to the wild bursts of Moorish music, which came ever and anon more distinctly from the quarter in which the Arab horseman had been seen to disappear.

De Vaux spoke in a whisper to the King — 'Were it not well, my liege, to send a page to the top of that sandbank ? Or would it stand with your pleasure that I prick forward ? Methinks, by all yonder clash and clang, if there be no more than five hundred men beyond the sand-hills, half of the Soldan's retinue must be drummers and cymbal-tossers. Shall I spur on ?'

The baron had checked his horse with the bit, and was just about to strike him with the spurs, when the King exclaimed — 'Not for the world. Such a caution would express suspicion, and could do little to prevent surprise, which, however, I apprehend not.'

They advanced accordingly in close and firm order till they surmounted the line of low sand-hills, and came in sight of the appointed station, when a splendid, but at the same time a startling, spectacle awaited them.



The Diamond of the Desert, so lately a solitary fountain, distinguished only amid the waste by solitary groups of palm-trees, was now the centre of an encampment, the embroidered flags and gilded ornaments of which glittered far and wide, and reflected a thousand rich tints against the setting sun. The coverings of the large pavilions were of the gayest colours — scarlet, bright yellow, pale blue, and other gaudy and gleaming hues — and the tops of their pillars, or tent-poles, were decorated with golden pomegranates and small silken flags. But, besides these distinguished pavilions, there were what Thomas de Vaux considered as a portentous number of the ordinary black tents of the Arabs, being sufficient, as he conceived, to accommodate, according to the Eastern fashion, a host of five thousand men. A number of Arabs and Kurds, fully corresponding to the extent of the encampment, were hastily assembling, each leading his horse in his hand, and their muster was accompanied by an astonishing clamour of their noisy instruments of martial music, by which, in all ages, the warfare of the Arabs has been animated.

They soon formed a deep and confused mass of dismounted cavalry in front of their encampment, when, at the signal of a shrill cry, which arose high over the clangour of the music, each cavalier sprung to his saddle. A cloud of dust, arising at the moment of this manœuvre, hid from Richard and his attendants the camp, the palm-trees, and the distant ridge of mountains, as well as the troops whose sudden movement had raised the cloud, and, ascending high over their heads, formed itself into the fantastic forms of writhed pillars, domes, and minarets. Another shrill yell was heard from the bosom of this cloudy tabernacle. It was the signal for the cavalry to advance, which they did at full gallop, disposing themselves as they came forward, so as to come in at once on the front, flanks, and rear of Richard's little body-guard, who were thus surrounded, and almost choked, by the dense clouds of dust enveloping them on each side, through which were seen alternately, and lost, the grim forms and wild faces of the Saracens, brandishing and tossing their lances in every possible direction, with the wildest cries and halloos, and frequently only reining up their horses when within a spear's length of the Christians, while those in the rear discharged over the heads of both parties thick volleys of arrows. One of these struck the litter in which the Queen was seated, who loudly screamed, and the red spot was on Richard's brow in an instant.

‘Ha ! St. George,’ he exclaimed, ‘we must take some order with this infidel scum !’

But Edith, whose litter was near, thrust her head out, and with her hand holding one of the shafts, exclaimed, ‘Royal Richard, beware what you do : see, these arrows are headless.’

‘Noble, sensible wench !’ exclaimed Richard ; ‘by Heaven, thou shamest us all by thy readiness of thought and eye. Be not moved, my English hearts,’ he exclaimed to his followers : ‘their arrows have no heads, and their spears, too, lack the steel points. It is but a wild welcome, after their savage fashion, though doubtless they would rejoice to see us daunted or disturbed. Move onward, slow and steady.’

The little phalanx moved forward accordingly, accompanied on all sides by the Arabs, with the shrillest and most piercing cries, the bowmen, meanwhile, displaying their agility by shooting as near the crests of the Christians as was possible, without actually hitting them, while the lancers charged each other with such rude blows of their blunt weapons, that more than one of them lost his saddle, and wellnigh his life, in this rough sport. All this, though designed to express welcome, had rather a doubtful appearance in the eyes of the Europeans.

As they had advanced nearly half-way towards the camp, King Richard and his suite forming, as it were, the nucleus round which this tumultuary body of horsemen howled, whooped, skirmished, and galloped, creating a scene of indescribable confusion, another shrill cry was heard, on which all these irregulars, who were on the front and upon the flanks of the little body of Europeans, wheeled off, and forming themselves into a long and deep column, followed with comparative order and silence in the rear of Richard’s troop. The dust began now to dissipate in their front, when there advanced to meet them, through that cloudy veil, a body of cavalry of a different and more regular description, completely armed with offensive and defensive weapons, and who might well have served as a body-guard to the proudest of Eastern monarchs. This splendid troop consisted of five hundred men, and each horse which it contained was worth an earl’s ransom. The riders were Georgian and Circassian slaves in the very prime of life ; their helmets and hauberks were formed of steel rings, so bright that they shone like silver ; their vestures were of the gayest colours, and some of cloth of gold or silver ; the sashes were twisted with silk and gold ; their rich turbans were plumed and jewelled ; and their

sabres and poniards, of Damascene steel, were adorned with gold and gems on hilt and scabbard.

This splendid array advanced to the sound of military music, and when they met the Christian body, they opened their files to the right and left, and let them enter between their ranks. Richard now assumed the foremost place in his troop, aware that Saladin himself was approaching. Nor was it long when, in the centre of his body-guard, surrounded by his domestic officers, and those hideous negroes who guard the Eastern haram, and whose misshapen forms were rendered yet more frightful by the richness of their attire, came the Soldan, with the look and manners of one on whose brow nature had written, 'This is a king!' In his snow-white turban, vest, and wide Eastern trowsers, wearing a sash of scarlet silk, without any other ornament, Saladin might have seemed the plainest-dressed man in his own guard. But closer inspection discerned in his turban that inestimable gem which was called by the poets the Sea of Light; the diamond on which his signet was engraved, and which he wore in a ring, was probably worth all the jewels of the English crown; and a sapphire, which terminated the hilt of his canjiar, was not of much inferior value. It should be added, that to protect him from the dust, which, in the vicinity of the Dead Sea, resembles the finest ashes, or, perhaps, out of Oriental pride, the Soldan wore a sort of veil attached to his turban, which partly obscured the view of his noble features. He rode a milk-white Arabian, which bore him as if conscious and proud of his noble burden.

There was no need of farther introduction. The two heroic monarchs, for such they both were, threw themselves at once from horseback, and the troops halting and the music suddenly ceasing, they advanced to meet each other in profound silence, and, after a courteous inclination on either side, they embraced as brethren and equals. The pomp and display upon both sides attracted no farther notice: no one saw aught save Richard and Saladin, and they too beheld nothing but each other. The looks with which Richard surveyed Saladin were, however, more intently curious than those which the Soldan fixed upon him; and the Soldan also was the first to break silence.

'The Melech Ric is welcome to Saladin as water to this desert. I trust he hath no distrust of this numerous array? Excepting the armed slaves of my household, those who surround

you with eyes of wonder and of welcome are, even the humblest of them, the privileged nobles of my thousand tribes ; for who that could claim a title to be present would remain at home when such a prince was to be seen as Richard, with the terrors of whose name, even on the sands of Yemen, the nurse stills her child and the free Arab subdues his restive steed ?'

'And these are all nobles of Araby ?' said Richard, looking around on wild forms with their persons covered with haiks, their countenance swart with the sunbeams, their teeth as white as ivory, their black eyes glancing with fierce and preternatural lustre from under the shade of their turbans, and their dress being in general simple, even to meanness.

'They claim such rank,' said Saladin ; 'but, though numerous, they are within the conditions of the treaty, and bear no arms but the sabre ; even the iron of their lances is left behind.'

'I fear,' muttered De Vaux in English, 'they have left them where they can be soon found. A most flourishing House of Peers, I confess, and would find Westminster Hall something too narrow for them.'

'Hush, De Vaux,' said Richard, 'I command thee. Noble Saladin,' he said, 'suspicion and thou cannot exist on the same ground. Seest thou,' pointing to the litters—'I too have brought some champions with me, though armed, perhaps, in breach of agreement, for bright eyes and fair features are weapons which cannot be left behind.'

The Soldan, turning to the litters, made an obeisance as lowly as if looking towards Mecca, and kissed the sand in token of respect.

'Nay,' said Richard, 'they will not fear a closer encounter, brother ; wilt thou not ride towards their litters, and the curtains will be presently withdrawn.'

'That may Allah prohibit !' said Saladin, 'since not an Arab looks on who would not think it shame to the noble ladies to be seen with their faces uncovered.'

'Thou shalt see them, then, in private, my royal brother,' answered Richard.

'To what purpose ?' answered Saladin, mournfully. 'Thy last letter was, to the hopes which I had entertained, like water to fire ; and wherefore should I again light a flame which may indeed consume, but cannot cheer, me ? But will not my brother pass to the tent which his servant hath prepared for him ? My principal black slave hath taken order for the reception of the princesses ; the officers of my household

will attend your followers ; and ourself will be the chamberlain of the royal Richard.'

He led the way accordingly to a splendid pavilion, where was everything that royal luxury could devise. De Vaux, who was in attendance, then removed the *chappe* (*capa*) or long riding-cloak which Richard wore, and he stood before Saladin in the close dress which showed to advantage the strength and symmetry of his person, while it bore a strong contrast to the flowing robes which disguised the thin frame of the Eastern monarch. It was Richard's two-handed sword that chiefly attracted the attention of the Saracen — a broad straight blade, the seemingly unwieldy length of which extended wellnigh from the shoulder to the heel of the wearer.

'Had I not,' said Saladin, 'seen this brand flaming in the front of battle, like that of Azrael, I had scarce believed that human arm could wield it. Might I request to see the Melech Ric strike one blow with it in peace, and in pure trial of strength?'

'Willingly, noble Saladin,' answered Richard ; and looking around for something whereon to exercise his strength, he saw a steel mace, held by one of the attendants, the handle being of the same metal, and about an inch and a half in diameter. This he placed on a block of wood.

The anxiety of De Vaux for his master's honour led him to whisper in English, 'For the blessed Virgin's sake, beware what you attempt, my liege ! Your full strength is not as yet returned ; give no triumph to the infidel.'

'Peace, fool !' said Richard, standing firm on his ground, and casting a fierce glance around ; 'thinkest thou that I can fail in *his* presence?'

The glittering broadsword, wielded by both his hands, rose aloft to the King's left shoulder, circled round his head, descended with the sway of some terrific engine, and the bar of iron rolled on the ground in two pieces, as a woodsman would sever a sapling with a hedging-bill.

'By the head of the Prophet, a most wonderful blow !' said the Soldan, critically and accurately examining the iron bar which had been cut asunder ; and the blade of the sword was so well tempered as to exhibit not the least token of having suffered by the feat it had performed. He then took the King's hand, and looking on the size and muscular strength which it exhibited, laughed as he placed it beside his own, so lank and thin, so inferior in brawn and sinew.



‘Ay, look well,’ said De Vaux, in English, ‘it will be long ere your long jackanape’s fingers do such a feat with your fine gilded reaping-hook there.’

‘Silence, De Vaux,’ said Richard; ‘by Our Lady, he understands or guesses thy meaning — be not so broad, I pray thee.’

The Soldan, indeed, presently said — ‘Something I would fain attempt, though wherefore should the weak show their inferiority in presence of the strong? Yet, each land hath its own exercises, and this may be new to the Melech Ric.’ So saying, he took from the floor a cushion of silk and down, and placed it upright on one end. ‘Can thy weapon, my brother, sever that cushion?’ he said to King Richard.

‘No, surely,’ replied the King; ‘no sword on earth, were it the Excalibar of King Arthur, can cut that which opposes no steady resistance to the blow.’

‘Mark, then,’ said Saladin; and, tucking up the sleeve of his gown, showed his arm, thin indeed and spare, but which constant exercise had hardened into a mass consisting of nought but bone, brawn, and sinew. He unsheathed his scimitar, a curved and narrow blade, which glittered not like the swords of the Franks, but was, on the contrary, of a dull blue colour, marked with ten millions of meandering lines, which showed how anxiously the metal had been welded by the armourer. Wielding this weapon, apparently so inefficient when compared to that of Richard, the Soldan stood resting his weight upon his left foot, which was slightly advanced; he balanced himself a little as if to steady his aim, then stepping at once forward, drew the scimitar across the cushion, applying the edge so dexterously, and with so little apparent effort, that the cushion seemed rather to fall asunder than to be divided by violence.

‘It is a juggler’s trick,’ said De Vaux, darting forward and snatching up the portion of the cushion which had been cut off, as if to assure himself of the reality of the feat; ‘there is gramarye in this.’

The Soldan seemed to comprehend him, for he undid the sort of veil which he had hitherto worn, laid it double along the edge of his sabre, extended the weapon edgeways in the air, and drawing it suddenly through the veil, although it hung on the blade entirely loose, severed that also into two parts, which floated to different sides of the tent, equally displaying the extreme temper and sharpness of the weapon and the exquisite dexterity of him who used it

‘Now, in good faith, my brother,’ said Richard, ‘thou art even matchless at the trick of the sword, and right perilous were it to meet thee. Still, however, I put some faith in a downright English blow, and what we cannot do by sleight we eke out by strength. Nevertheless, in truth thou art as expert in inflicting wounds as my sage Hakim in curing them. I trust I shall see the learned leech ; I have much to thank him for, and had brought some small present.’

As he spoke, Saladin exchanged his turban for a Tartar cap. He had no sooner done so, than De Vaux opened at once his extended mouth and his large round eyes, and Richard gazed with scarce less astonishment, while the Soldan spoke in a grave and altered voice : ‘The sick man, sayeth the poet, while he is yet infirm, knoweth the physician by his step ; but when he is recovered, he knoweth not even his face when he looks upon him.’

‘A miracle ! — a miracle !’ exclaimed Richard.

‘Of Mahound’s working, doubtless,’ said Thomas de Vaux.

‘That I should lose my learned Hakim,’ said Richard, ‘merely by absence of his cap and robe, and that I should find him again in my royal brother Saladin !’

‘Such is oft the fashion of the world,’ answered the Soldan : ‘the tattered robe makes not always the dervise.’

‘And it was through thy intercession,’ said Richard, ‘that yonder Knight of the Leopard was saved from death ; and by thy artifice that he revisited my camp in disguise ?’

‘Even so,’ replied Saladin ; ‘I was physician enough to know that, unless the wounds of his bleeding honour were stanchèd, the days of his life must be few. His disguise was more easily penetrated than I had expected from the success of my own.’

‘An accident,’ said King Richard (probably alluding to the circumstance of his applying his lips to the wound of the supposed Nubian), ‘let me first know that his skin was artificially discoloured ; and that hint once taken, detection became easy, for his form and person are not to be forgotten. I confidently expect that he will do battle on the morrow.’

‘He is full in preparation and high in hope,’ said the Soldan. ‘I have furnished him with weapons and horse, thinking nobly of him from what I have seen under various disguises.’

‘Knows he now,’ said Richard, ‘to whom he lies under obligation ?’

‘He doth,’ replied the Saracen ; ‘I was obliged to confess my person when I unfolded my purpose.’

'And confessed he aught to you?' said the King of England.

'Nothing explicit,' replied the Soldan; 'but from much that passed between us, I conceive his love is too highly placed to be happy in its issue.'

'And thou knowest that his daring and insolent passion crossed thine own wishes?' said Richard.

'I might guess so much,' said Saladin; 'but his passion had existed ere my wishes had been formed, and, I must now add, is likely to survive them. I cannot, in honour, revenge me for my disappointment on him who had no hand in it. Or, if this high-born dame loved him better than myself, who can say that she did not justice to a knight, of her own religion, who is full of nobleness?'

'Yet of too mean lineage to mix with the blood of Plantagenet,' said Richard, haughtily.

'Such may be your maxims in Frangistan,' replied the Soldan. 'Our poets of the Eastern countries say, that a valiant camel-driver is worthy to kiss the lip of a fair queen, when a cowardly prince is not worthy to salute the hem of her garment. But with your permission, noble brother, I must take leave of thee for the present, to receive the Duke of Austria and yonder Nazarene knight, much less worthy of hospitality, but who must yet be suitably entreated, not for their sakes, but for mine own honour, for what saith the sage Lokman — "Say not that the food is lost unto thee which is given to the stranger; for if his body be strengthened and fattened therewithal, not less is thine own worship and good name cherished and augmented"?''

The Saracen monarch departed from King Richard's tent, and having indicated to him, rather with signs than with speech, where the pavilion of the Queen and her attendants was pitched, he went to receive the Marquis of Montserrat and his attendants, for whom, with less good-will, but with equal splendour, the magnificent Soldan had provided accommodations. The most ample refreshments, both in the Oriental and after the European fashion, were spread before the royal and princely guests of Saladin, each in their own separate pavilion; and so attentive was the Soldan to the habits and taste of his visitors, that Grecian slaves were stationed to present them with the goblet, which is the abomination of the sect of Mohammed. Ere Richard had finished his meal, the ancient *omrah*, who had brought the Soldan's letter to the Christian camp, entered with a plan of the ceremonial to be observed on the succeeding day

of combat. Richard, who knew the taste of his old acquaintance, invited him to pledge him in a flagon of wine of Schiraz; but Abdallah gave him to understand, with a rueful aspect, that self-denial, in the present circumstances, was a matter in which his life was concerned; for that Saladin, tolerant in many respects, both observed and enforced by high penalties the laws of the Prophet.

'Nay, then,' said Richard, 'if he loves not wine, that lightener of the human heart, his conversion is not to be hoped for, and the prediction of the mad priest of Engaddi goes like chaff down the wind.'

The King then addressed himself to settle the articles of combat, which cost a considerable time, as it was necessary on some points to consult with the opposite parties, as well as with the Soldan.

They were at length finally agreed upon, and adjusted by a protocol in French and in Arabian, which was subscribed by Saladin as umpire of the field, and by Richard and Leopold as guarantees for the two combatants. As the *omrah* took his final leave of King Richard for the evening, De Vaux entered.

'The good knight,' he said, 'who is to do battle to-morrow requests to know whether he may not to-night pay duty to his royal godfather?'

'Hast thou seen him, De Vaux?' said the King, smiling; 'and didst thou know an ancient acquaintance?'

'By our Lady of Lanercost,' answered De Vaux, 'there are so many surprises and changes in this land, that my poor brain turns. I scarce knew Sir Kenneth of Scotland till his good hound, that had been for a short while under my care, came and fawned on me; and even then I only knew the tyke by the depth of his chest, the roundness of his foot, and his manner of baying; for the poor gaze-hound was painted like any Venetian courtesan.'

'Thou art better skilled in brutes than men, De Vaux,' said the King.

'I will not deny,' said De Vaux, 'I have found them oftentimes the honester animals. Also, your Grace is pleased to term me sometimes a brute myself; besides that I serve the Lion, whom all men acknowledge the king of brutes.'

'By St. George, there thou brokest thy lance fairly on my brow,' said the King. 'I have ever said thou bast a sort of wit, De Vaux — marry, one must strike thee with a sledge-

hammer ere it can be made to sparkle. But to the present gear; is the good knight well armed and equipped?’

‘Fully, my liege, and nobly,’ answered De Vaux; ‘I know the armour well: it is that which the Venetian commissary offered your Highness, just ere you became ill, for five hundred byzants.’

‘And he hath sold it to the infidel Soldan, I warrant me, for a few ducats more, and present payment. These Venetians would sell the Sepulchre itself!’

‘The armour will never be borne in a nobler cause,’ said De Vaux.

‘Thanks to the nobleness of the Saracen,’ said the King, ‘not to the avarice of the Venetians.’

‘I would to God your Grace would be more cautious,’ said the anxious De Vaux. ‘Here are we deserted by all our allies, for points of offence given to one or another; we cannot hope to prosper upon the land, and we have only to quarrel with the amphibious republic to lose the means of retreat by sea!’

‘I will take care,’ said Richard, impatiently; ‘but school me no more. Tell me rather, for it is of interest, hath the knight a confessor?’

‘He hath,’ answered De Vaux: ‘the hermit of Engaddi, who erst did him that office when preparing for death, attends him on the present occasion, the fame of the duel having brought him hither.’

‘Tis well,’ said Richard; ‘and now for the knight’s request. Say to him, Richard will receive him when the discharge of his devoir beside the Diamond of the Desert shall have atoned for his fault beside the Mount of St. George; and as thou passest through the camp, let the Queen know I will visit her pavilion; and tell Blondel to meet me there.’

De Vaux departed, and in about an hour afterwards, Richard, wrapping his mantle around him, and taking his ghittern in his hand, walked in the direction of the Queen’s pavilion. Several Arabs passed him, but always with averted heads and looks fixed upon the earth, though he could observe that all gazed earnestly after him when he was past. This led him justly to conjecture that his person was known to them, but that either the Soldan’s commands or their own Oriental politeness forbade them to seem to notice a sovereign who desired to remain incognito.

When the King reached the pavilion of his Queen, he found it guarded by those unhappy officials whom Eastern jealousy



places around the zenana. Blondel was walking before the door, and touched his rote from time to time in a manner which made the Africans show their ivory teeth, and bear burden with their strange gestures and shrill unnatural voices.

'What art thou after with this herd of black cattle, Blondel?' said the King. 'Wherefore goest thou not into the tent?'

'Because my trade can neither spare the head nor the fingers,' said Blondel; 'and these honest blackamoors threatened to cut me joint from joint if I pressed forward.'

'Well, enter with me,' said the King, 'and I will be thy safeguard.'

The blacks accordingly lowered pikes and swords to King Richard, and bent their eyes on the ground, as if unworthy to look upon him. In the interior of the pavilion, they found Thomas de Vaux in attendance on the Queen. While Berengaria welcomed Blondel, King Richard spoke for some time secretly and apart with his fair kinswoman.

At length, 'Are we still foes, my fair Edith?' he said, in a whisper.

'No, my liege,' said Edith, in a voice just so low as not to interrupt the music: 'none can bear enmity against King Richard, when he deigns to show himself as he really is, generous and noble, as well as valiant and honourable.' So saying, she extended her hand to him.

The King kissed it in token of reconciliation, and then proceeded. 'You think, my sweet cousin, that my anger in this matter was feigned; but you are deceived. The punishment I inflicted upon this knight was just; for he had betrayed — no matter for how tempting a bribe, fair cousin — the trust committed to him. But I rejoice, perchance as much as you, that to-morrow gives him a chance to win the field, and throw back the stain which for a time clung to him upon the actual thief and traitor. No! future times may blame Richard for impetuous folly; but they shall say that, in rendering judgment, he was just when he should, and merciful when he could.'

'Laud not thyself, cousin King,' said Edith. 'They may call thy justice cruelty, thy mercy caprice.'

'And do not thou pride thyself,' said the King, 'as if thy knight, who hath not yet buckled on his armour, were unbelted in triumph. Conrade of Montserrat is held a good lance. What if the Scot should lose the day?'

'It is impossible!' said Edith, firmly. 'My own eyes saw yonder Conrade tremble and change colour, like a base thief.'

He is guilty, and the trial by combat is an appeal to the justice of God. I myself, in such a cause, would encounter him without fear.'

'By the mass, I think thou wouldst, wench,' said the King, 'and beat him to boot; for there never breathed a truer Plantagenet than thou.'

He paused, and added in a very serious tone, 'See that thou continue to remember what is due to thy birth.'

'What means that advice, so seriously given at this moment?' said Edith. 'Am I of such light nature as to forget my name — my condition?'

'I will speak plainly, Edith,' answered the King, 'and as to a friend: What will this knight be to you, should he come off victor from yonder lists?'

'To *me*?' said Edith, blushing deep with shame and displeasure. 'What *can* he be to me more than an honoured knight, worthy of such grace as Queen Berengaria might confer on him, had he selected her for his lady, instead of a more unworthy choice? The meanest knight may devote himself to the service of an empress, but the glory of his choice,' she said proudly, 'must be his reward.'

'Yet he hath served and suffered much for you,' said the King.

'I have paid his services with honour and applause, and his sufferings with tears,' answered Edith. 'Had he desired other reward, he would have done wisely to have bestowed his affections within his own degree.'

'You would not then wear the bloody night-gear for his sake?' said King Richard.

'No more,' answered Edith, 'than I would have required him to expose his life by an action in which there was more madness than honour.'

'Maidens talk ever thus,' said the King; 'but when the favoured lover presses his suit, she says, with a sigh, her stars had decreed otherwise.'

'Your Grace has now, for the second time, threatened me with the influence of my horoscope,' Edith replied, with dignity. 'Trust me, my liege, whatever be the power of the stars, your poor kinswoman will never wed either infidel or obscure adventurer. Permit me, that I listen to the music of Blondel, for the tone of your royal admonitions is scarce so grateful to the ear.'

The conclusion of the evening offered nothing worthy of notice.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

Heard ye the din of battle bray,  
Lance to lance, and horse to horse?

GRAY.

IT had been agreed, on account of the heat of the climate, that the judicial combat, which was the cause of the present assemblage of various nations at the Diamond of the Desert, should take place at one hour after sunrise. The wide lists, which had been constructed under the inspection of the Knight of the Leopard, inclosed a space of hard sand, which was one hundred and twenty yards long by forty in width. They extended in length from north to south, so as to give both parties the equal advantage of the rising sun. Saladin's royal seat was erected on the western side of the inclosure, just in the centre, where the combatants were expected to meet in mid encounter. Opposed to this was a gallery with closed casements, so contrived that the ladies, for whose accommodation it was erected, might see the fight without being themselves exposed to view. At either extremity of the lists was a barrier, which could be opened or shut at pleasure. Thrones had been also erected, but the Archduke, perceiving that his was lower than King Richard's, refused to occupy it; and Cœur-de-Lion, who would have submitted to much ere any formality should have interfered with the combat, readily agreed that the sponsors, as they were called, should remain on horseback during the fight. At one extremity of the lists were placed the followers of Richard, and opposed to them were those who accompanied the defender, Conrade. Around the throne destined for the Soldan were ranged his splendid Georgian Guards, and the rest of the inclosure was occupied by Christian and Mohammedan spectators.

Long before daybreak, the lists were surrounded by even a larger number of Saracens than Richard had seen on the preceding evening. When the first ray of the sun's glorious orb

arose above the desert, the sonorous call, 'To prayer — to prayer!' was poured forth by the Soldan himself, and answered by others, whose rank and zeal entitled them to act as muezzins. It was a striking spectacle to see them all sink to earth, for the purpose of repeating their devotions, with their faces turned to Mecca. But when they arose from the ground, the sun's rays, now strengthening fast, seemed to confirm the Lord of Gilsland's conjecture of the night before. They were flashed back from many a spear-head, for the pointless lances of the preceding day were certainly no longer such. De Vaux pointed it out to his master, who answered with impatience, that he had perfect confidence in the good faith of the Soldan; but if De Vaux was afraid of his bulky body, he might retire.

Soon after this the noise of timbrels was heard, at the sound of which the whole Saracen cavaliers threw themselves from their horses, and prostrated themselves, as if for a second morning prayer. This was to give an opportunity to the Queen, with Edith and her attendants, to pass from the pavilion to the gallery intended for them. Fifty guards of Saladin's seraglio escorted them, with naked sabres, whose orders were, to cut to pieces whomsoever, were he prince or peasant, should venture to gaze on the ladies as they passed, or even presume to raise his head until the cessation of the music should make all men aware that they were lodged in their gallery, not to be gazed on by the curious eye.

This superstitious observance of Oriental reverence to the fair sex called forth from Queen Berengaria some criticisms very unfavourable to Saladin and his country. But their den, as the royal fair called it, being securely closed and guarded by their sable attendants, she was under the necessity of contenting herself with seeing, and laying aside for the present the still more exquisite pleasure of being seen.

Meantime the sponsors of both champions went, as was their duty, to see that they were duly armed, and prepared for combat. The Archduke of Austria was in no hurry to perform this part of the ceremony, having had rather an unusually severe debauch upon wine of Schiraz the preceding evening. But the Grand Master of the Temple, more deeply concerned in the event of the combat, was early before the tent of Conrade of Montserrat. To his great surprise, the attendants refused him admittance.

'Do you not know me, ye knaves?' said the Grand Master, in great anger.

'We do, most valiant and reverend,' answered Conrade's squire; 'but even *you* may not at present enter: the Marquis is about to confess himself.'

'Confess himself!' exclaimed the Templar, in a tone where alarm mingled with surprise and scorn; 'and to whom, I pray thee?'

'My master bid me be secret,' said the squire; on which the Grand Master pushed past him, and entered the tent almost by force.

The Marquis of Montserrat was kneeling at the feet of the hermit of Engaddi, and in the act of beginning his confession.

'What means this, Marquis?' said the Grand Master; 'up, for shame — or, if you must needs confess, am not I here?'

'I have confessed to you too often already,' replied Conrade, with a pale cheek and a faltering voice. 'For God's sake, Grand Master, begone, and let me unfold my conscience to this holy man.'

'In what is he holier than I am?' said the Grand Master. 'Hermit — prophet — madman, say, if thou darest, in what thou excellest me?'

'Bold and bad man,' replied the hermit, 'know that I am like the latticed window, and the divine light passes through to avail others, though, alas! it helpeth not me. Thou art like the iron stanchions, which neither receive light themselves nor communicate it to any one.'

'Prate not to me, but depart from this tent,' said the Grand Master; 'the Marquis shall not confess this morning, unless it be to me, for I part not from his side.'

'Is this *your* pleasure?' said the hermit to Conrade; 'for think not I will obey that proud man, if you continue to desire my assistance.'

'Alas,' said Conrade, irresolutely, 'what would you have me say? Farewell for a while; we will speak anon.'

'Oh, procrastination,' exclaimed the hermit, 'thou art a soul-murderer! Unhappy man, farewell, not for a while, but until we shall both meet — no matter where. And for thee,' he added, turning to the Grand Master, 'TREMBLE!'

'Tremble!' replied the Templar, contemptuously, 'I cannot if I would.'

The hermit heard not his answer, having left the tent.

'Come, to this gear hastily,' said the Grand Master, 'since thou wilt needs go through the foolery. Hark thee, I think I know most of thy frailties by heart, so we may omit the



detail, which may be somewhat a long one, and begin with the absolution. What signifies counting the spots of dirt that we are about to wash from our hands?’

‘Knowing what thou art thyself,’ said Conrade, ‘it is blasphemous to speak of pardoning another.’

‘That is not according to the canon, Lord Marquis,’ said the Templar: ‘thou art more scrupulous than orthodox. The absolution of the wicked priest is as effectual as if he were himself a saint; otherwise, God help the poor penitent! What wounded man inquires whether the surgeon that tents his gashes have clean hands or no? Come, shall we to this toy?’

‘No,’ said Conrade, ‘I will rather die unconfessed than mock the sacrament.’

‘Come, noble Marquis,’ said the Templar, ‘rouse up your courage, and speak not thus. In an hour’s time thou shalt stand victorious in the lists, or confess thee in thy helmet like a valiant knight.’

‘Alas, Grand Master,’ answered Conrade, ‘all augurs ill for this affair. The strange discovery by the instinct of a dog, the revival of this Scottish knight, who comes into the lists like a spectre—all betokens evil.’

‘Pshaw,’ said the Templar, ‘I have seen thee bend thy lance boldly against him in sport, and with equal chance of success; think thou art but in a tournament, and who bears him better in the tilt-yard than thou? Come, squires and armourers, your master must be accoutred for the field.’

The attendants entered accordingly, and began to arm the Marquis.

‘What morning is without?’ said Conrade.

‘The sun rises dimly,’ answered a squire.

‘Thou seest, Grand Master,’ said Conrade, ‘nought smiles on us.’

‘Thou wilt fight the more coolly, my son,’ answered the Templar; ‘thank Heaven, that hath tempered the sun of Palestine to suit thine occasion.’

Thus jested the Grand Master; but his jests had lost their influence on the harassed mind of the Marquis, and, notwithstanding his attempts to seem gay, his gloom communicated itself to the Templar.

‘This craven,’ he thought, ‘will lose the day in pure faintness and cowardice of heart, which he calls tender conscience. I, whom visions and auguries shake not—who am firm in my purpose as the living rock—I should have fought the combat

myself. Would to God the Scot may strike him dead on the spot; it were next best to his winning the victory. But come what will, he must have no other confessor than myself; our sins are too much in common, and he might confess my share with his own.'

While these thoughts passed through his mind, he continued to assist the Marquis in arming, but it was in silence.

The hour at length arrived, the trumpets sounded, the knights rode into the lists armed at all points, and mounted like men who were to do battle for a kingdom's honour. They wore their visors up, and riding around the lists three times, showed themselves to the spectators. Both were goodly persons, and both had noble countenances. But there was an air of manly confidence on the brow of the Scot—a radiancy of hope, which amounted even to cheerfulness, while, although pride and effort had recalled much of Conrade's natural courage, there lowered still on his brow a cloud of ominous despondence. Even his steed seemed to tread less lightly and blythely to the trumpet-sound than the noble Arab which was bestrode by Sir Kenneth; and the *spruchsprecher* shook his head while he observed that, while the challenger rode around the lists in the course of the sun, that is, from right to left, the defender made the same circuit *widdersins*, that is, from left to right, which is in most countries held ominous.

A temporary altar was erected just beneath the gallery occupied by the Queen, and beside it stood the hermit in the dress of his order as a Carmelite friar. Other churchmen were also present. To this altar the challenger and defender were successively brought forward, conducted by their respective sponsors. Dismounting before it, each knight avouched the justice of his cause by a solemn oath on the Evangelists, and prayed that his success might be according to the truth or falsehood of what he then swore. They also made oath that they came to do battle in knightly guise, and with the usual weapons, disclaiming the use of spells, charms, or magical devices, to incline victory to their side. The challenger pronounced his vow with a firm and manly voice, and a bold and cheerful countenance. When the ceremony was finished, the Scottish knight looked at the gallery, and bent his head to the earth, as if in honour of those invisible beauties which were inclosed within; then, loaded with armour as he was, sprung to the saddle without the use of the stirrup, and made his courser carry him in a succession of caracoles to his station at the

eastern extremity of the lists. Conrade also presented himself before the altar with boldness enough ; but his voice, as he took the oath, sounded hollow, as if drowned in his helmet. The lips with which he appealed to Heaven to adjudge victory to the just quarrel grew white as they uttered the impious mockery. As he turned to remount his horse, the Grand Master approached him closer, as if to rectify something about the sitting of his gorget, and whispered — ‘Coward and fool ! recall thy senses, and do me this battle bravely, else, by Heaven, shouldst thou escape him, thou escapest not *me* !’

The savage tone in which this was whispered perhaps completed the confusion of the Marquis’s nerves, for he stumbled as he made to horse ; and though he recovered his feet, sprung to the saddle with his usual agility, and displayed his address in horsemanship as he assumed his position opposite to the challenger’s, yet the accident did not escape those who were on the watch for omens, which might predict the fate of the day.

The priests, after a solemn prayer that God would show the rightful quarrel, departed from the lists. The trumpets of the challenger then rung a flourish, and a herald-at-arms proclaimed at the eastern end of the lists — ‘Here stands a good knight, Sir Kenneth of Scotland, champion for the royal King Richard of England, who accuseth Conrade Marquis of Montserrat of foul treason and dishonour done to the said king.’

When the words Kenneth of Scotland announced the name and character of the champion, hitherto scarce generally known, a loud and cheerful acclaim burst from the followers of King Richard, and hardly, notwithstanding repeated commands of silence, suffered the reply of the defendant to be heard. He, of course, avouched his innocence, and offered his body for battle. The esquires of the combatants now approached, and delivered to each his shield and lance, assisting to hang the former around his neck, that his two hands might remain free, one for the management of the bridle, the other to direct the lance.

The shield of the Scot displayed his old bearing, the leopard, but with the addition of a collar and broken chain, in allusion to his late captivity. The shield of the Marquis bore, in reference to his title, a serrated and rocky mountain. Each shook his lance aloft, as if to ascertain the weight and toughness of the unwieldy weapon, and then laid it in the rest. The sponsors, heralds, and squires now retired to the barriers, and the combatants sat opposite to each other, face to face, with

couched lance and closed vizor, the human form so completely inclosed that they looked more like statues of molten iron than beings of flesh and blood. The silence of suspense was now general: men breathed thicker, and their very souls seemed seated in their eyes, while not a sound was to be heard save the snorting and pawing of the good steeds, who, sensible of what was about to happen, were impatient to dash into career. They stood thus for perhaps three minutes, when, at a signal given by the Soldan, an hundred instruments rent the air with their brazen clamours, and each champion striking his horse with the spurs and slacking the rein, the horses started into full gallop, and the knights met in mid space with a shock like a thunderbolt. The victory was not in doubt — no, not one moment. Conrade, indeed, showed himself a practised warrior; for he struck his antagonist knightly in the midst of his shield, bearing his lance so straight and true that it shattered into splinters from the steel spear-head up to the very gauntlet. The horse of Sir Kenneth recoiled two or three yards and fell on his haunches, but the rider easily raised him with hand and rein. But for Conrade there was no recovery. Sir Kenneth's lance had pierced through the shield, through a plated corslet of Milan steel, through a 'secret,' or coat of linked mail, worn beneath the corslet, had wounded him deep in the bosom, and borne him from his saddle, leaving the truncheon of the lance fixed in his wound. The sponsors, heralds, and Saladin himself, descending from his throne, crowded around the wounded man; while Sir Kenneth, who had drawn his sword ere yet he discovered his antagonist was totally helpless, now commanded him to avow his guilt. The helmet was hastily unclosed, and the wounded man, gazing wildly on the skies, replied — 'What would you more? God hath decided justly: I am guilty; but there are worse traitors in the camp than I. In pity to my soul, let me have a confessor!'

He revived as he uttered these words.

'The talisman — the powerful remedy, royal brother!' said King Richard to Saladin.

'The traitor,' answered the Soldan, 'is more fit to be dragged from the lists to the gallows by the heels than to profit by its virtues; and some such fate is in his look,' he added, after gazing fixedly upon the wounded man; 'for, though his wound may be cured, yet Azrael's seal is on the wretch's brow.'

'Nevertheless,' said Richard, 'I pray you do for him what you may, that he may at least have time for confession. Slay

not soul and body. To him one half-hour of time may be worth more, by ten thousandfold, than the life of the oldest patriarch.'

'My royal brother's wish shall be obeyed,' said Saladin. 'Slaves, bear this wounded man to our tent.'

'Do not so,' said the Templar, who had hitherto stood gloomily looking on in silence. 'The royal Duke of Austria and myself will not permit this unhappy Christian prince to be delivered over to the Saracens, that they may try their spells upon him. We are his sponsors, and demand that he be assigned to our care.'

'That is, you refuse the certain means offered to recover him?' said Richard.

'Not so,' said the Grand Master, recollecting himself. 'If the Soldan useth lawful medicines, he may attend the patient in my tent.'

'Do so, I pray thee, good brother,' said Richard to Saladin, 'though the permission be ungraciously yielded. But now to a more glorious work. Sound, trumpets — shout, England — in honour of England's champion!'

Drum, clarion, trumpet, and cymbal rung forth at once, and the deep and regular shout which for ages has been the English acclamation sounded amidst the shrill and irregular yells of the Arabs, like the diapason of the organ amid the howling of a storm. There was silence at length.

'Brave Knight of the Leopard,' resumed Cœur-de-Lion, 'thou hast shown that the Ethiopian *may* change his skin, and the leopard his spots, though clerks quote Scripture for the impossibility. Yet I have more to say to you when I have conducted you to the presence of the ladies, the best judges and best rewarders of deeds of chivalry.'

The Knight of the Leopard bowed assent.

'And thou, princely Saladin, wilt also attend them. I promise thee our Queen will not think herself welcome, if she lacks the opportunity to thank her royal host for her most princely reception.'

Saladin bent his head gracefully, but declined the invitation.

'I must attend the wounded man,' he said. 'The leech leaves not his patient more than the champion the lists, even if he be summoned to a bower like those of Paradise. And farther, royal Richard, know that the blood of the East flows not so temperately in the presence of beauty as that of your land. What saith the Book itself — "Her eye is as the edge of



the sword of the Prophet, who shall look upon it?" He that would not be burnt avoideth to tread on hot embers; wise men spread not the flax before a bickering torch. "He," saith the sage, "who hath forfeited a treasure, doth not wisely to turn back his head to gaze at it."

Richard, it may be believed, respected the motives of delicacy which flowed from manners so different from his own, and urged his request no farther.

'At noon,' said the Soldan, as he departed, 'I trust ye will all accept a collation under the black camel-skin tent of a chief of Kurdistan.'

The same invitation was circulated among the Christians, comprehending all those of sufficient importance to be admitted to sit at a feast made for princes.

'Hark!' said Richard, 'the timbrels announce that our Queen and her attendants are leaving their gallery; and see, the turbans sink on the ground, as if struck down by a destroying angel. All lie prostrate, as if the glance of an Arab's eye could sully the lustre of a lady's cheek! Come, we will to the pavilion, and lead our conqueror thither in triumph. How I pity that noble Soldan, who knows but of love as it is known to those of inferior nature!'

Blondel tuned his harp to its boldest measure, to welcome the introduction of the victor into the pavilion of Queen Berengaria. He entered, supported on either side by his sponsors, Richard and Thomas [William] Longsword, and knelt gracefully down before the Queen, though more than half the homage was silently rendered to Edith, who sat on her right hand.

'Unarm him, my mistresses,' said the King, whose delight was in the execution of such chivalrous usages. 'Let beauty honour chivalry! Undo his spurs, Berengaria; Queen though thou be, thou owest him what marks of favour thou canst give. Unlace his helmet, Edith — by this hand thou shalt, wert thou the proudest Plantagenet of the line, and he the poorest knight on earth!'

Both ladies obeyed the royal commands — Berengaria with bustling assiduity, as anxious to gratify her husband's humour, and Edith blushing and growing pale alternately, as slowly and awkwardly she undid, with Longsword's assistance, the fastenings which secured the helmet to the gorget.

'And what expect you from beneath this iron shell?' said Richard, as the removal of the casque gave to view the noble countenance of Sir Kenneth, his face glowing with recent

exertion, and not less so with present emotion. 'What think ye of him, gallants and beauties?' said Richard. 'Doth he resemble an Ethiopian slave, or doth he present the face of an obscure and nameless adventurer? No, by my good sword! Here terminate his various disguises. He hath knelt down before you unknown save by his worth; he arises equally distinguished by birth and by fortune. The adventurous knight, Kenneth, arises David Earl of Huntingdon, Prince Royal of Scotland!'

There was a general exclamation of surprise, and Edith dropped from her hand the helmet which she had just received.

'Yes, my masters,' said the King, 'it is even so. Ye know how Scotland deceived us when she proposed to send this valiant earl, with a bold company of her best and noblest, to aid our arms in this conquest of Palestine, but failed to comply with her engagements. This noble youth, under whom the Scottish Crusaders were to have been arrayed, thought foul scorn that his arm should be withheld from the holy warfare, and joined us at Sicily with a small train of devoted and faithful attendants, which was augmented by many of his countrymen to whom the rank of their leader was unknown. The confidants of the royal prince had all, save one old follower, fallen by death, when his secret, but too well kept, had nearly occasioned my cutting off, in a Scottish adventurer, one of the noblest hopes of Europe. Why did you not mention your rank, noble Huntingdon, when endangered by my hasty and passionate sentence? Was it that you thought Richard capable of abusing the advantage I possessed over the heir of a king whom I have so often found hostile?'

'I did you not that injustice, royal Richard,' answered the Earl of Huntingdon; 'but my pride brooked not that I should avow myself Prince of Scotland in order to save my life, endangered for default of loyalty. And, moreover, I had made my vow to preserve my rank unknown till the Crusade should be accomplished; nor did I mention it save *in articulo mortis*, and under the seal of confession, to yonder reverend hermit.'

'It was the knowledge of that secret, then, which made the good man so urgent with me to recall my severe sentence?' said Richard. 'Well did he say that, had this good knight fallen by my mandate, I should have wished the deed undone though it had cost me a limb. A limb! I should have wished it undone had it cost me my life, since the world would

have said that Richard had abused the condition in which the heir of Scotland had placed himself, by his confidence in his generosity.'

'Yet, may we know of your Grace by what strange and happy chance this riddle was at length read?' said the Queen Berengaria.

'Letters were brought to us from England,' said the King, 'in which we learnt, among other unpleasant news, that the King of Scotland had seized upon three of our nobles, when on a pilgrimage to St. Ninian, and alleged as a cause that his heir, being supposed to be fighting in the ranks of the Teutonic Knights against the heathen of Borussia, was, in fact, in our camp and in our power; and, therefore, William proposed to hold these nobles as hostages for his safety. This gave me the first light on the real rank of the Knight of the Leopard, and my suspicions were confirmed by De Vaux, who, on his return from Ascalon, brought back with him the Earl of Huntingdon's sole attendant, a thick-skulled slave, who had gone thirty miles to unfold to De Vaux a secret he should have told to me.'

'Old Strauchan must be excused,' said the Lord of Gilsland. 'He knew from experience that my heart is somewhat softer than if I wrote myself Plantagenet.'

'Thy heart soft, thou commodity of old iron and Cumberland flint that thou art!' exclaimed the King. 'It is we Plantagenets who boast soft and feeling hearts, Edith,' turning to his cousin, with an expression which called the blood into her cheek. 'Give me thy hand, my fair cousin, and, Prince of Scotland, thine.'

'Forbear, my lord,' said Edith, hanging back, and endeavouring to hide her confusion under an attempt to rally her royal kinsman's credulity. 'Remember you not that my hand was to be the signal of converting to the Christian faith the Saracen and Arab, Saladin and all his turbaned host?'

'Ay, but the wind of prophecy hath chopped about, and sits now in another corner,' replied Richard.

'Mock not, lest your bonds be made strong,' said the hermit, stepping forward. 'The heavenly host write nothing but truth in their brilliant records: it is man's eyes which are too weak to read their characters aright. Know that, when Saladin and Kenneth of Scotland slept in my grotto, I read in the stars that there rested under my roof a prince, the natural foe of Richard, with whom the fate of Edith Plantagenet was to be united. Could I doubt that this must be the Soldan,

whose rank was well known to me, as he often visited my cell to converse on the revolutions of the heavenly bodies? Again, the lights of the firmament proclaimed that this prince, the husband of Edith Plantagenet, should be a Christian; and I — weak and wild interpreter! — argued thence the conversion of the noble Saladin, whose good qualities seemed often to incline him towards the better faith. The sense of my weakness hath humbled me to the dust, but in the dust I have found comfort. I have not read aright the fate of others; who can assure me but that I may have miscalculated mine own? God will not have us break into His council-house or spy out His hidden mysteries. We must wait His time with watching and prayer, with fear and with hope. I came hither the stern seer — the proud prophet — skilled, as I thought, to instruct princes, and gifted even with supernatural powers, but burdened with a weight which I deemed no shoulders but mine could have borne. But my bands have been broken: I go hence humble in mine ignorance, penitent, and not hopeless.'

With these words he withdrew from the assembly; and it is recorded that, from that period, his frenzy fits seldom occurred, and his penances were of a milder character, and accompanied with better hopes of the future. So much is there of self-opinion, even in insanity, that the conviction of his having entertained and expressed an unfounded prediction with so much vehemence seemed to operate, like loss of blood on the human frame, to modify and lower the fever of the brain.

It is needless to follow into farther particulars the conferences at the royal tent, or to inquire whether David Earl of Huntingdon was as mute in the presence of Edith Plantagenet as when he was bound to act under the character of an obscure and nameless adventurer. It may be well believed that he there expressed, with suitable earnestness, the passion to which he had so often before found it difficult to give words.

The hour of noon now approached, and Saladin waited to receive the princes of Christendom in a tent which, but for its large size, differed little from that of the ordinary shelter of the common Kurdman, or Arab; yet beneath its ample and sable covering was prepared a banquet after the most gorgeous fashion of the East, extended upon carpets of the richest stuffs, with cushions laid for the guests. But we cannot stop to describe the cloth of gold and silver, the superb embroidery in arabesque, the shawls of cashmere, and the muslins of

India, which were here unfolded in all their splendour; far less to tell the different sweetmeats, ragouts edged with rice coloured in various manners, with all the other niceties of Eastern cookery. Lambs roasted whole, and game and poultry dressed in pilaus, were piled in vessels of gold, and silver, and porcelain, and intermixed with large mazers of sherbet, cooled in snow and ice from the caverns of Mount Lebanon. A magnificent pile of cushions at the head of the banquet seemed prepared for the master of the feast and such dignitaries as he might call to share that place of distinction, while, from the roof of the tent in all quarters, but over this seat of eminence in particular, waved many a banner and pennon, the trophies of battles won and kingdoms overthrown. But amongst and above them all, a long lance displayed a shroud, the banner of Death, with this impressive inscription — ‘SALADIN, KING OF KINGS — SALADIN, VICTOR OF VICTORS — SALADIN MUST DIE.’ Amid these preparations, the slaves who had arranged the refreshments stood with drooped heads and folded arms, mute and motionless as monumental statuary, or as automata, which waited the touch of the artist to put them in motion.

Expecting the approach of his princely guests, the Soldan, imbued, as most were, with the superstitions of his time, paused over a horoscope and corresponding scroll, which had been sent to him by the hermit of Engaddi when he departed from the camp.

‘Strange and mysterious science,’ he muttered to himself, ‘which, pretending to draw the curtain of futurity, misleads those whom it seems to guide, and darkens the scene which it pretends to illuminate! Who would not have said that I was that enemy most dangerous to Richard, whose enmity was to be ended by marriage with his kinswoman? Yet it now appears that a union betwixt this gallant earl and the lady will bring about friendship betwixt Richard and Scotland, an enemy more dangerous than I, as a wildcat in a chamber is more to be dreaded than a lion in a distant desert. But then,’ he continued to mutter to himself, ‘the combination intimates that this husband was to be Christian. Christian!’ he repeated, after a pause. ‘That gave the insane, fanatic star-gazer hopes that I might renounce my faith! but me, the faithful follower of our Prophet — me it should have undeceived. Lie there, mysterious scroll,’ he added, thrusting it under the pile of cushions; ‘strange are thy bodements and fatal, since, even when true in themselves, they work upon those who attempt to decipher their



meaning all the effects of falsehood. How now! what means this intrusion?’

He spoke to the dwarf Nectabanus, who rushed into the tent fearfully agitated, with each strange and disproportioned feature wrenched by horror into still more extravagant ugliness — his mouth open, his eyes staring, his hands, with their shrivelled and deformed fingers, wildly expanded.

‘What now?’ said the Soldan, sternly.

‘*Accipe hoc!*’ groaned out the dwarf.

‘Ha! sayst thou?’ answered Saladin.

‘*Accipe hoc!*’ replied the panic-struck creature, unconscious, perhaps, that he repeated the same words as before.

‘Hence, I am in no vein for foolery,’ said the Emperor.

‘Nor am I further fool,’ said the dwarf, ‘than to make my folly help out my wits to earn my bread, poor helpless wretch! Hear — hear me, great Soldan.’

‘Nay, if thou hast actual wrong to complain of,’ said Saladin, ‘fool or wise, thou art entitled to the ear of a king. Retire hither with me’; and he led him into the inner tent.

Whatever their conference related to, it was soon broken off by the fanfare of the trumpets, announcing the arrival of the various Christian princes, whom Saladin welcomed to his tent with a royal courtesy well becoming their rank and his own, but chiefly he saluted the young Earl of Huntingdon, and generously congratulated him upon prospects which seemed to have interfered with and overclouded those which he had himself entertained.

‘But think not,’ said the Soldan, ‘thou noble youth, that the Prince of Scotland is more welcome to Saladin than was Kenneth to the solitary Ilderim when they met in the desert, or the distressed Ethiop to the Hakim Adonbec. A brave and generous disposition like thine hath a value independent of condition and birth, as the cool draught which I here proffer thee is as delicious from an earthen vessel as from a goblet of gold.’

The Earl of Huntingdon made a suitable reply, gratefully acknowledging the various important services he had received from the generous Soldan; but when he had pledged Saladin in the bowl of sherbet which the Soldan had proffered to him, he could not help remarking with a smile, ‘The brave cavalier, Ilderim, knew not of the formation of ice, but the munificent Soldan cools his sherbet with snow.’

‘Wouldst thou have an Arab or a Kurdman as wise as a

Hakim ?' said the Soldan. 'He who does on a disguise must make the sentiments of his heart and the learning of his head accord with the dress which he assumes. I desired to see how a brave and single-hearted cavalier of Frangistan would conduct himself in debate with such a chief as I then seemed ; and I questioned the truth of a well-known fact, to know by what arguments thou wouldst support thy assertion.'

While they were speaking, the Archduke of Austria, who stood a little apart, was struck with the mention of iced sherbet, and took with pleasure and some bluntness the deep goblet, as the Earl of Huntingdon was about to replace it.

'Most delicious !' he exclaimed, after a deep draught, which the heat of the weather, and the feverishness following the debauch of the preceding day, had rendered doubly acceptable. He sighed as he handed the cup to the Grand Master of the Templars. Saladin made a sign to the dwarf, who advanced and pronounced, with a harsh voice, the words, '*Accipe hoc !*' The Templar started, like a steed who sees a lion under a bush beside the pathway ; yet instantly recovered, and to hide, perhaps, his confusion, raised the goblet to his lips ; but those lips never touched that goblet's rim. The sabre of Saladin left its sheath as lightning leaves the cloud. It was waved in the air, and the head of the Grand Master rolled to the extremity of the tent, while the trunk remained for a second standing, with the goblet still clenched in its grasp, then fell, the liquor mingling with the blood that spurted from the veins.<sup>1</sup>

There was a general exclamation of 'Treason,' and Austria, nearest to whom Saladin stood with the bloody sabre in his hand, started back as if apprehensive that his turn was to come next. Richard and others laid hand on their swords.

'Fear nothing, noble Austria,' said Saladin, as composedly as if nothing had happened, 'nor you, royal England, be wroth at what you have seen. Not for his manifold treasons ; not for the attempt which, as may be vouched by his own squire, he instigated against King Richard's life ; not that he pursued the Prince of Scotland and myself in the desert, reducing us to save our lives by the speed of our horses ; not that he had stirred up the Maronites to attack us upon this very occasion, had I not brought up unexpectedly so many Arabs as rendered the scheme abortive — not for any or all of these crimes does he now lie there, although each were deserving such a doom ; but because, scarce half an hour ere he polluted our presence, as

<sup>1</sup> See Death of Grand Master. Note 11.

the simoom empoids the atmosphere, he poniarded his comrade and accomplice, Conrade of Montserrat, lest he should confess the infamous plots in which they had both been engaged.'

'How! Conrade murdered! And by the Grand Master, his sponsor and most intimate friend!' exclaimed Richard. 'Noble Soldan, I would not doubt thee; yet this must be proved, otherwise——'

'There stands the evidence,' said Saladin, pointing to the terrified dwarf. 'Allah, who sends the firefly to illuminate the night-season, can discover secret crimes by the most contemptible means.'

The Soldan proceeded to tell the dwarf's story, which amounted to this:—In his foolish curiosity, or, as he partly confessed, with some thoughts of pilfering, Nectabanus had strayed into the tent of Conrade, which had been deserted by his attendants, some of whom had left the encampment to carry the news of his defeat to his brother, and others were availing themselves of the means which Saladin had supplied for revelling. The wounded man slept under the influence of Saladin's wonderful talisman, so that the dwarf had opportunity to pry about at pleasure, until he was frightened into concealment by the sound of a heavy step. He skulked behind a curtain, yet could see the motions, and hear the words, of the Grand Master, who entered, and carefully secured the covering of the pavilion behind him. His victim started from sleep, and it would appear that he instantly suspected the purpose of his old associate, for it was in a tone of alarm that he demanded wherefore he disturbed him.

'I come to confess and to absolve thee,' answered the Grand Master.

Of their further speech the terrified dwarf remembered little, save that Conrade implored the Grand Master not to break a wounded reed, and that the Templar struck him to the heart with a Turkish dagger, with the words '*Accipe hoc*'—words which long afterwards haunted the terrified imagination of the concealed witness.

'I verified the tale,' said Saladin, 'by causing the body to be examined; and I made this unhappy being, whom Allah hath made the discoverer of the crime, repeat in your own presence the words which the murderer spoke; and you yourselves saw the effect which they produced upon his conscience.'

The Soldan paused; and the King of England broke silence:

‘If this be true, as I doubt not, we have witnessed a great act of justice, though it bore a different aspect. But wherefore in this presence? wherefore with thine own hand?’

‘I had designed otherwise,’ said Saladin; ‘but, had I not hastened his doom, it had been altogether averted, since, if I had permitted him to taste of my cup, as he was about to do, how could I, without incurring the brand of inhospitality, have done him to death as he deserved? Had he murdered my father, and afterwards partaken of my food and my bowl, not a hair of his head could have been injured by me. But enough of him — let his carcass and his memory be removed from amongst us.’

The body was carried away, and the marks of the slaughter obliterated or concealed with such ready dexterity as showed that the case was not altogether so uncommon as to paralyse the assistants and officers of Saladin’s household.

But the Christian princes felt that the scene which they had beheld weighed heavily on their spirits, and although, at the courteous invitation of the Soldan, they assumed their seats at the banquet, yet it was with the silence of doubt and amazement. The spirits of Richard alone surmounted all cause for suspicion or embarrassment. Yet he, too, seemed to ruminate on some proposition, as if he were desirous of making it in the most insinuating and acceptable manner which was possible. At length he drank off a large bowl of wine, and, addressing the Soldan, desired to know whether it was not true that he had honoured the Earl of Huntingdon with a personal encounter.

Saladin answered with a smile, that he had proved his horse and his weapons with the heir of Scotland, as cavaliers are wont to do with each other when they meet in the desert; and modestly added that, though the combat was not entirely decisive, he had not, on his part, much reason to pride himself on the event. The Scot, on the other hand, disclaimed the attributed superiority, and wished to assign it to the Soldan.

‘Enough of honour thou hast had in the encounter,’ said Richard, ‘and I envy thee more for that than for the smiles of Edith Plantagenet, though one of them might reward a bloody day’s work. But what say you, noble princes; is it fitting that such a royal ring of chivalry should break up without something being done for future times to speak of? What is the overthrow and death of a traitor to such a fair garland of honour as is here assembled, and which ought not to part without witnessing something more worthy of their regard? How say you, princely Soldan? What if we two should now,

and before this fair company, decide the long-contended question for this land of Palestine, and end at once these tedious wars? Yonder are the lists ready, nor can Paynimrie ever hope a better champion than thou. I, unless worthier offers, will lay down my gauntlet in behalf of Christendom, and, in all love and honour, we will do mortal battle for the possession of Jerusalem.'

There was a deep pause for the Soldan's answer. His cheek and brow coloured highly, and it was the opinion of many present that he hesitated whether he should accept the challenge. At length he said, 'Fighting for the Holy City against those whom we regard as idolaters, and worshippers of stocks and stones and graven images, I might confide that Allah would strengthen my arm; or if I fell beneath the sword of the Melech Ric, I could not pass to Paradise by a more glorious death. But Allah has already given Jerusalem to the true believers, and it were a tempting the God of the Prophet to peril, upon my own personal strength and skill, that which I hold securely by the superiority of my forces.'

'If not for Jerusalem, then,' said Richard, in the tone of one who would entreat a favour of an intimate friend, 'yet for the love of honour, let us run at least three courses with grinded lances?'

'Even this,' said Saladin, half-smiling at Cœur-de-Lion's affectionate earnestness for the combat — 'even this I may not lawfully do. The master places the shepherd over the flock, not for the shepherd's own sake, but for the sake of the sheep. Had I a son to hold the sceptre when I fell, I might have had the liberty, as I have the will, to brave this bold encounter; but your own Scripture sayeth, that when the herdsman is smitten, the sheep are scattered.'

'Thou hast had all the fortune,' said Richard, turning to the Earl of Huntingdon, with a sigh. 'I would have given the best year in my life for that one half-hour beside the Diamond of the Desert!'

The chivalrous extravagance of Richard awakened the spirits of the assembly, and when at length they arose to depart, Saladin advanced and took Cœur-de-Lion by the hand.

'Noble King of England,' he said, 'we now part never to meet again. That your league is dissolved, no more to be reunited, and that your native forces are far too few to enable you to prosecute your enterprise, is as well known to me as to yourself. I may not yield you up that Jerusalem which you so



much desire to hold. It is to us, as to you, a Holy City. But whatever other terms Richard demands of Saladin shall be as willingly yielded as yonder fountain yields its waters. Ay, and the same should be as frankly afforded by Saladin if Richard stood in the desert with but two archers in his train.'

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The next day saw Richard's return to his own camp, and in a short space afterwards the young Earl of Huntingdon was espoused by Edith Plantagenet. The Soldan sent, as a nuptial present on this occasion, the celebrated TALISMAN; but though many cures were wrought by means of it in Europe, none equalled in success and celebrity those which the Soldan achieved. It is still in existence, having been bequeathed by the Earl of Huntingdon to a brave knight of Scotland, Sir Simon of the Lee, in whose ancient and highly-honoured family it is still preserved; and although charmed stones have been dismissed from the modern pharmacopœia, its virtues are still applied to for stopping blood and in cases of canine madness.

Our story closes here, as the terms on which Richard relinquished his conquests are to be found in every history of the period.

## APPENDIX TO INTRODUCTION

TO

### THE TALISMAN

WHILE warring in the Holy Land, Richard was seized with an ague. The best leeches of the camp were unable to effect the cure of the King's disease; but the prayers of the army were more successful. He became convalescent, and the first symptom of his recovery was a violent longing for pork. But pork was not likely to be plentiful in a country whose inhabitants had an abhorrence for swine's flesh; and

Though his men should be hanged  
They ne might, in that countrèy,  
For gold, ne silver, ne no monèy,  
No pork find, take, ne get,  
That King Richard might aught of eat.  
An old knight with Richard biding,  
When he heard of that tiding,  
That the kingis wants were swyche,  
To the steward he spake privyliche —  
'Our lord the king sore is sick, I wis,  
After porck he alonged is.  
Ye may none find to selle.  
No man be hardy him so to telle;  
If he did he might die.  
Now behoves to done as I shall say,  
Tho' he wete nought of that.  
Take a Saracen, young and fat;  
In haste let the thief be slain,  
Opened, and his skin off flayn,  
And sodden full hastily,  
With powder and with spicery,  
And with saffron of good colour.  
When the king feels thereof savour,  
Out of ague if he be went,  
He shall have thereto good talent.  
When he has a good taste,  
And eaten well a good repast,  
And supped of the brewis a sup,  
Slept after and swet a drop,  
Through Goddis help and my counsail,  
Soon he shall be fresh and hail.'  
The sooth to say, at wordes few,  
Slain and sodden was the heathen shrew.  
Before the king it was forth brought:  
Quod his men, 'Lord, we have pork sought;  
Eates and suppes of the brewis soote,  
Thorough grace of God it shall be your boot.'  
Before King Richard carff a knight,

He ate faster than he carve might.  
 The king ate the flesh and gnaw the bones,  
 And drank well after for the nonce.  
 And when he had eaten enough,  
 His folk hem turned away, and lough.  
 He lay still and drew in his arm;  
 His chamberlain him wrapped warm.  
 He lay and slept, and swet a stound,  
 And became whole and sound.  
 King Richard clad him and arose,  
 And walked abouten in the close.

An attack of the Saracens was repelled by Richard in person, the consequence of which is told in the following lines :—

When King Richard had rested a while.  
 A knight his arms 'gan unlace,  
 Him to comfort and solace.  
 Him was brought a sop in wine.  
 'The head of that ilke swine,  
 That I of ate,' the cook he bade.  
 'For feeble I am, and faint and mad.  
 Of mine evil now I am fear;  
 Serve me therewith at my soupere.'  
 Quod the cook, 'That head I ne have.'  
 Then said the king, 'So God me save,  
 But I see the head of that swine,  
 For sooth, thou shalt lesen thine.'  
 The cook saw none other might be;  
 He fet the head and let him see.  
 He fell on knees, and made a cry—  
 'Lo, here the head! my Lord, mercy!'

The cook had certainly some reason to fear that his master would be struck with horror at the recollection of the dreadful banquet to which he owed his recovery, but his fears were soon dissipated.

The swarte vis when the king seeth,  
 His black beard and white teeth,  
 How his lippes grinned wide,  
 'What devil is this?' the king cried,  
 And 'gan to laugh as he were wode.  
 'What! is Saracen's flesh thus good?  
 That, never erst I nought wist!  
 By Godes death and his uprist,  
 Shall we never die for default,  
 While we may in any assault,  
 Slee Saracens, the flesh may take,  
 And seethen and roasten and do hem bake,  
 [And] Gnawen her flesh to the bones!  
 Now I have it proved once,  
 For hunger ere I be wo,  
 I and my folk shall eat mo!'

The besieged now offered to surrender, upon conditions of safety to the inhabitants; while all the public treasure, military machines, and arms were delivered to the victors, together with the further ransom of one hundred thousand byzants. After this capitulation, the following extraordinary scene took place. We shall give it in the words of the humorous and amiable George Ellis, the collector and the editor of these romances :—

Though the garrison had faithfully performed the other articles of their contract, they were unable to restore the Cross, which was not in their possession, and were therefore treated by the Christians with great cruelty. Daily reports of their sufferings were carried to Saladin; and as many of them were persons of the highest distinction, that monarch, at the solicitation of their friends, dispatched an embassy to King Richard with magnificent presents, which he offered for the ransom of the captives. The ambassadors were persons the most respectable from their age, their rank, and their

eloquence. They delivered their message in terms of the utmost humility, and, without arraigning the justice of the conqueror in his severe treatment of their countrymen, only solicited a period to that severity, laying at his feet the treasures with which they were intrusted, and pledging themselves and their master for the payment of any further sums which he might demand as the price of mercy.

King Richard spake with wordes mild,  
 'The gold to take, God me shield!  
 Among you partes every charge.  
 I brought, in shippes and in barge,  
 More gold and silver with me  
 Than has your lord, and swilke three.  
 To his treasure have I no need!  
 But for my love I you bid,  
 To meat with me that ye dwell;  
 And afterward I shall you tell.  
 Thorough counsel I shall you answer,  
 What bode ye shall to your lord bear.'

The invitation was gratefully accepted. Richard, in the meantime, gave secret orders to his marshal that he should repair to the prison, select a certain number of the most distinguished captives, and, after carefully noting their names on a roll of parchment, cause their heads to be instantly struck off; that these heads should be delivered to the cook with instructions to clear away the hair, and, after boiling them in a caldron, to distribute them on several platters, one to each guest, observing to fasten on the forehead of each the piece of parchment expressing the name and family of the victim.

'An hot head bring me befora,  
 As I were well apayed withall,  
 Eat thereof fast I shall,  
 As it were a tender chick,  
 To see how the others will like.'

This horrible order was punctually executed. At noon the guests were summoned to wash by the music of the waits; the King took his seat, attended by the principal officers of his court, at the high table, and the rest of the company were marshalled at a long table below him. On the cloth were placed portions of salt at the usual distances, but neither bread, wine, nor water. The ambassadors, rather surprised at this omission, but still free from apprehension, awaited in silence the arrival of the dinner, which was announced by the sound of pipes, trumpets, and tabours; and beheld, with horror and dismay, the unnatural banquet introduced by the steward and his officers. Yet their sentiments of disgust and abhorrence, and even their fears, were, for a time suspended by their curiosity. Their eyes were fixed on the King, who, without the slightest change of countenance, swallowed the morsels as fast as they could be supplied by the knight who carved them.

Every man then poked other;  
 They said, 'This is the devil's brother,  
 That slays our men, and thus hem eats!'

Their attention was then involuntarily fixed on the smoking heads before them; they traced in the swollen and distorted features the resemblance of a friend or near relation, and received from the fatal scroll which accompanied each dish the sad assurance that this resemblance was not imaginary. They sat in torpid silence, anticipating their own fate in that of their countrymen, while their ferocious entertainer, with fury in his eyes, but with courtesy on his lips, insulted them by frequent invitations to merriment. At length this first course was removed, and its place supplied by venison, cranes, and other dainties, accompanied by the richest wines. The King then apologised to them for what had passed, which he attributed to his ignorance of their taste; and assured them of his religious respect for their character as ambassadors, and of his readiness to grant them a safe-conduct for their return. This boon was all that they now wished to claim; and

King Richard spake to an old man,  
 'Wendes home to your Soudan!  
 His melancholy that ye abate;  
 And sayes that ye came too late.  
 Too slowly was your time y-guessed;

Ere ye came, the flesh was dressed,  
 That men shoulde serve with me,  
 Thus at noon, and my meynie.  
 Say him, it shall him nought avail,  
 Though he for-bar us our vitail,  
 Bread, wine, fish, flesh, salmon, and conger;  
 Of us none shall die with hunger,  
 While we may wenden to fight,  
 And slay the Saracens downright,  
 Wash the flesh, and roast the head.  
 With oo Saracen I may well feed  
 Well a nine or a ten  
 Of my good Christian men.  
 King Richard shall warrant,  
 There is no flesh so nourissant  
 Unto an English man,  
 Partridge, plover, heron, ne swan,  
 Cow ne ox, sheep ne swine,  
 As the head of a Sarazyn.  
 There he is fat, and thereto tender,  
 And my men be lean and slender.  
 While any Saracen quick be,  
 Livand now in this Syrie,  
 For meat will we nothing care.  
 Abouten fast we shall fare,  
 And every day we shall eat  
 All so many as we may get.  
 To England will we nought gon,  
 Till they be eaten every one.<sup>1</sup>

The reader may be curious to know owing to what circumstances so extraordinary an invention as that which imputed cannibalism to the King of England should have found its way into his history. Mr. [G. P. Rainsford] James, to whom we owe so much that is curious, seems to have traced the origin of this extraordinary rumour.

'With the army of the cross also was a multitude of men,' the same author [Guibert] declares, 'who made it a profession to be without money; they walked barefoot, carried no arms, and even preceded the beasts of burden in the march, living upon roots and herbs, and presenting a spectacle both disgusting and pitiable. A Norman, who according to all accounts was of noble birth, but who, having lost his horse, continued to follow as a foot soldier, took the strange resolution of putting himself at the head of this race of vagabonds, who willingly received him for their king. Amongst the Saracens these men became well known under the name of *Thafurs* (which Guibert translates *Trudentes*), and were held in great horror from the general persuasion that they fed on the dead bodies of their enemies—a report which was occasionally justified, and which the king of the Thafurs took care to encourage. This respectable monarch was frequently in the habit of stopping his followers, one by one, in any narrow defile, and of causing them to be searched carefully, lest the possession of the least sum of money should render them unworthy of the name of his subjects. If even two sous were found upon any one, he was instantly expelled the society of his tribe, the king bidding him contemptuously buy arms and fight.

'This troop, so far from being cumbersome to the army, was infinitely serviceable, carrying burdens, bringing in forage, provisions, and tribute, working the machines in the sieges, and, above all, spreading consternation among the Turks, who feared death from the lances of the knights less than that further consummation they heard of under the teeth of the Thafurs.'<sup>2</sup>

It is easy to conceive, that an ignorant minstrel, finding the taste and ferocity of the Thafurs commemorated in the historical accounts of the Holy wars, has ascribed their practices and propensities to the monarch of England, whose ferocity was considered as an object of exaggeration as legitimate as his valour.

<sup>1</sup> Ellis's *Specimens of Early English Metrical Romances*, vol. ii. pp. 225-236.

<sup>2</sup> James's *History of Chivalry* [ed. 1830], p. 178.



## NOTES

### NOTE 1.—THE LEE PENNY, p. xli

AT a meeting of the Scottish Society of Antiquaries (8th April 1861), an interesting communication 'On some Scottish Magical Charm-Stones, or Curing-Stones,' was read by the late Professor Sir James Y. Simpson, Bart., when the Lee Penny was among the articles exhibited. In his paper the eminent writer observes, that 'In the present century this ancient medical charm-stone has acquired a world-wide reputation as the original of the *Talisman* of Sir Walter Scott, though latterly its therapeutic reputation has greatly declined, and almost entirely ceased.'—See the *Proceedings*, vol. iv. p. 222 (*Laing*).

[Original later edition.] Since the last sheet of this volume was printed off, a kind friend has transmitted the following curious document, by which it would appear that the alleged virtues of the Lee Penny had at one time given uneasiness to our Presbyterian brethren of Clydesdale.

(Copy)

Extract from the Assemblie Books at Glasgow, anent the Lee Penny stone.

*Apud Glasgow, 21 of October.<sup>1</sup>*

SYNOD. SESS. 2

QUHILK day, amongst the referries of the Brethren of the Ministry of Lanark, it was proponed to the Synod that Gavin Hamilton of Raploch had pursuait an Complaint before them against Sir James Lockhart of Lee, anent the superstitious using of an Stone, set in silver, for the curing of deseased Cattle, quik the said Gavin affirmed could not be lawfully usit, and that they had deferrit to give ony decisionne thairin till the advice of the Assemblie might be had concerning the same. The Assemblie having inquirit of the manner of using thereof, and particularly understood, be examination of the said Laird of Lee and otherwise, that the custom is only to cast the stone in some water, and give the deseasit Cattle thereof to drink, and that the same is done without using any words, such as Charmers and Sorcereirs use in thair unlawfull practices; and considering that in nature thair are many things seen to work strange effects, whereof no human wit can give a reason, it having pleast God to give to stones and herbs a speciall vertue for healing of many infirmities in man and beast, advises the Brethren to surcease thair process, as therein they perceive no ground of Offence, and admonishes the said Laird of Lee, in the using of the said stone, to

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<sup>1</sup> The year is unfortunately not given; but the Sir James Lockhart named in the extract was born in 1596 and died in 1674.

take held that it be usit hereafter with the least scandle that possibly maybe. Extract out of the Books of the Assemblie holden at Glasgow, and subscribed at thair command.

M. ROBERT YOUNG, Clerk to the  
Assemblie at Glasgow.

NOTE 2. — GAB, GABER, p. 11

This French word signified a sort of sport much used among the French chivalry, which consisted in vying with each other in making the most romantic gasconades. The verb and the meaning are retained in Scottish.

NOTE 3. — GIAMSCHID, p. 29

[The legend is generally told thus: — Jamshid, a great and good king of Persia, grew proud in his old days and turned a terrible tyrant. The people, in despair, called in to their aid Zohak, a king who ruled on the western confines of Persia, and who had slain his own father (*not* of the house of Jamshid). Out of each shoulder of Zohak there grew a black serpent, which he fed on men's brains. The Persians found that Zohak was as great a tyrant as Jamshid, and at last a brave blacksmith, Kaweh by name, called all the people together in the market-place, put his leather apron on a spear, as a sort of banner, proclaimed a revolt against Zohak, and made Feridun, great-grandson of Jamshid, king over Persia in that king's stead.]

NOTE 4. — HYMN TO AHRIMAN, p. 32

The worthy and learned clergyman by whom this species of hymn has been translated desires that, for fear of misconception, we should warn the reader to recollect that it is composed by a heathen, to whom the real causes of moral and physical evil are unknown, and who views their pre-dominance in the system of the universe as all must view that appalling fact who have not the benefit of the Christian revelation. On our own part, we beg to add, that we understand the style of the translator is more paraphrastic than can be approved by those who are acquainted with the singularly curious original. The translator seems to have despaired of rendering into English verse the flights of Oriental poetry; and, possibly, like many learned and ingenious men, finding it impossible to discover the sense of the original, he may have tacitly substituted his own. The gentle and candid reader may believe this worthy and learned clergyman or not, as shall be most pleasing to himself.

NOTE 5. — SIR THOMAS MULTON OF GILSLAND, p. 69

He was a historical hero, faithfully attached, as is here expressed, to King Richard, and is noticed with distinction in the romance mentioned in the Introduction. At the beginning of the romance, mention is made of a tournament, in which the king returns three times with a fresh suit of armour, which acted as a disguise: and at each appearance some knight of great prowess had a sharp encounter with him. When Richard returned the second time, the following is Mr. Ellis's account of his proceedings:—

He now mounted a bay horse, assumed a suit of armour painted red, and a helmet, the crest of which was a red hound, with a long tail which reached to the earth—an emblem intended to convey his indignation against the heathen hounds who defiled the Holy Land, and his determination to attempt their destruction. Having sufficiently signalled himself in his new disguise, he rode into the ranks for the purpose of selecting a more formidable adversary; and, delivering his spear to his squire, took his ma-

and assaulted Sir Thomas de Multon, a knight whose prowess was deservedly held in the highest estimation. Sir Thomas, apparently not at all disordered by a blow which would have felled a common adversary, calmly advised him to go and amuse himself elsewhere; but Richard having aimed at him a second and more violent stroke, by which his helmet was nearly crushed, he returned it with such vigour that the king lost his stirrups, and, recovering himself with some difficulty, rode off with all speed into the forest. — Ellis's *Specimens*, p. 187.

NOTE 6. — ASSISES DE JERUSALEM, p. 109

The Assises de Jerusalem were the digest of feudal law, composed by Godfrey of Boulogne, for the government of the Latin kingdom of Palestine, when reconquered from the Saracens. It was composed with advice of 'the patriarch and barons, of the clergy and laity,' and is, says the historian Gibbon, 'a precious monument of feudatory jurisprudence,' founded upon those principles of freedom which were essential to the system.

NOTE 7. — PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE, p. 153

This may appear so extraordinary and improbable a proposition, that it is necessary to say such a one was actually made. The historians, however, substitute the widowed Queen of Naples, sister of Richard, for the bride, and Saladin's brother for the bridegroom. They appear to have been ignorant of the existence of Edith of Plantagenet. — See Mill's *History of the Crusades*, vol. ii. p. 61.

NOTE 8. — SCOTS, FAIR AND FALSE, p. 160

Such were the terms in which the English used to speak of their poor northern neighbours, forgetting that their own encroachments upon the independence of Scotland obliged the weaker nation to defend themselves by policy as well as force. The disgrace must be divided between Edward I. and III., who enforced their domination over a free country, and the Scots who were compelled to take compulsory oaths without any purpose of keeping them.

NOTE 9. — MONTROSE'S LINES, p. 260

In this extract it has been pointed out that the Author, quoting from memory, committed originally a mistake by substituting in line first 'inconsistency,' and in line third repeating 'love,' with the still graver error of giving them as 'Montrose's Lines.' They bear such a striking resemblance to Montrose's 'New Ballad to the Tune of "I'll never love thee more"' as to render this quite excusable. The true author was Richard Lovelace, in his collection, *Lucasta* (1649), in a song addressed to his mistress, of three stanzas, set to music, on his 'going to the wars.' The last stanza reads thus —

Yet this inconstancy is such,  
As you too shall adore;  
I could not love thee, dear, so much,  
Lov'd I not honour more.

In like manner, Mr. Mark Napier, in his *Memoirs of Montrose*, complains of the quotation at the head of chap. xv. of *A Legend of Montrose*, but Sir Walter Scott only literally copied the words as published by Ritson in 1794 (*Laing*).

## NOTE 10. — SIR TRISTREM, p. 260

An universal tradition ascribed to Sir Tristrem, famous for his love of the fair Queen Yseult, the laws concerning the practice of woodcraft, or *venerie*, as it was called, being those that related to the rules of the chase, which were deemed of so much consequence during the Middle Ages.

## NOTE 11. — DEATH OF GRAND MASTER, p. 310

The manner of the death of the supposed Grand Master of the Templars was taken from the real tragedy enacted by Saladin upon the person of Arnold or Reginald de Chatillon. This person, a soldier of fortune, had seized a castle on the verge of the desert, from whence he made plundering excursions, and insulted and abused the pilgrims who were on their journey to Mecca. It was chiefly on his account that Saladin declared war against Guy de Lusignan, the last Latin king of the Holy Land. The Christian monarch was defeated by Saladin with the loss of 30,000 men, and having been made prisoner, with Chatillon and others, was conducted before the Soldan. The victor presented to his exhausted captive a cup of sherbet, cooled in snow. Lusignan, having drank, was about to hand the cup to Chatillon, when the Soldan interfered. 'Your person,' he said, 'my royal prisoner, is sacred, but the cup of Saladin must not be profaned by a blasphemous robber and ruffian.' So saying, he slew the captive knight by a blow of his scimitar. — See Gibbon's *History*, xi. p. 129, ed. 1820.

# GLOSSARY

OF

## WORDS, PHRASES, AND ALLUSIONS

- ANACUS**, correctly, a frame with coloured beads strung on vertical wires. But here probably confounded with the thyrsus, the mystic staff of the phallic worshippers
- ABOUTEN**, about
- ABUBEKER ALWAKEL** (the Father of the Virgin, the Representative), or better, **ABUBEKR AS-SADDIK** (the Truthful), the father-in-law of Mohammed and his first successor (caliph)
- ACCIPERE HOC**, take that
- AFFLICTÆ SPONSÆ NE OB-  
VISCARIS**, forget not the bride in her tribulation
- AHRIMAN**. See Arimanes
- AINSELL**, ownself
- ALAN**, wolf-greyhound
- ALI**, the nephew and son-in-law of Mohammed, and fourth Caliph
- ALLAH ACKBAR**, God is victorious; **ALLA HU**, God is God; **ALLAH KERIM**, God is merciful
- ALONGED IS**, longeth for
- ANASTASIUS**, or, *Memoirs of a Greek written at the Close of the Eighteenth Century* (1819), a romance, by Thomas Hope, an art-collector and virtuoso
- ANE**, one
- APAYED**, pleased
- ARAUNAH THE JEEUSITE**, an allusion to 2 Samuel xxiv. 16
- AREBLAST**, a cross-bow
- ARIMANES**, or **AHRIMAN**, the Principle of Evil in Zoroaster's religion, the ancient religion of Persia
- ARTHUR'S SEAT**, the rocky mountain overlooking Edinburgh
- ASTROLABE**, a circular instrument for observing the stars
- ASTUCIOUS**, astute, cunning
- ASTURIAS**, a Christian kingdom of Spain (8th to 10th cent.; then united to Leon)
- ATABAL**, Arab kettle-drum
- AULD**, old
- BAARENHAUTERS**, more correctly **BÄRENHÄUTER**, meaning 'bear-skinners,' a nickname given to the *lands knechte*, or *lanz-knechte*, of the 16th and 17th centuries in Germany, from their love of lying stretched indolently on bear-skin rugs
- BAGNIO**, a prison for slaves
- BALQUIDDER**, or **BALQUHIDDER**, a district in the west of Perthshire, celebrated in Scottish song, and closely associated with Rob Roy
- BALSORA**, **BASSORA**, **BUSSORAH**, or **BASRAH**, formerly one of the great cities of the Orient, stands on the river Tigris-Euphrates, 60 or 70 miles from its mouth
- BARE**, a horse of Barbary (Morocco) breed
- BARNS-BREAKING**, larking, an idle frolic
- BAYARD**, **BLIND**. See Blind Bayard
- BEAU GARÇON**, beau, man of fashion
- BEAU-SEANT**, the black and white standard of the Knights Templars. See *Ivanhoe*, footnote, p. 115
- BELLE AMIE**, mistress
- BENEDICTIO DOMINI**, etc. (p. 90), the Lord's blessing be with thee!
- BENEFIT OF CLERGY**, the privilege claimed by one who could read, to escape the sentence, on his first conviction for certain offences; finally abolished in 1827
- BENEVENT**, or **BENEVENTO**, a city of Southern Italy
- BICKERING**, tremulous, crackling, spluttering
- BIDE**, to stop, stay
- BIGGIN**, a child's cap
- BINK**, a plate wall-rack
- BLACKSMITH** (p. 29). See Note 3,
- BLEAR A PLAIN MAN'S EYE**, blind him by flattery
- BLIND BAYARD**, the famous steed of Amadis of Gaul, afterwards belonged to the hero Rinaldo
- BLINK**, a glance, moment
- BLONDEL**, the favourite minstrel of Richard, who, according to the well-known legend, discovered his place of imprisonment in Germany
- BODE**, a message
- BORAK OF THE PROPHET**, a new sort of beast, with the face of a man, emeralds for eyes, and bright jewels in its wings, which, as Mohammed saw in a vision,



- carried him through the air to the gate of Jerusalem
- BORUSSIA**, the eastern parts of modern Prussia
- BOSWELL, JAMES**, the author of the celebrated *Life of Dr. Johnson*
- BREWIS**, broth
- BRIGANDINE**, or **BRIGANTINE**, a coat of scale or plate armour
- BROCKIT**, a cow with a black and white spotted face
- BURGONET**, a kind of helmet
- BUSK**, dress up, arrange
- BYZANT**, a gold coin = 10s. to £1, struck at Byzantium, and widely current in the Middle Ages
- CAABA**, **HOLY**, the holiest temple in Mecca, the spot to which all Mohammedans long to make a pilgrimage, at least once, before they die; also a greatly venerated black stone in that temple
- CAFTAN**, a long vest with sleeves, worn under an outer coat, and fastened by a girdle round the waist
- CALIPH**, the title of the successors of the Prophet Mohammed as political and religious head of the Moslem world
- CALLANT**, lad
- CAMEL-DRIVER OF MECCA**, Mohammed, who originally followed that calling
- CAMISOLA**, or **CAMICIA**, a large kind of shirt
- CANGIAR**, or **CANJIAR**, a small two-edged Arab cutlasc, a poniard
- CANTRIPS**, tricks, spells
- CARCANET**, a jewelled chain, necklace, collar
- CARFF**, carved
- CARLINE**, old woman
- CAROLUS**, Charles, *i.e.* Charles I.; also the gold coin first struck in that king's reign, and worth 20s.
- CAROUSE**, a large draught of liquor
- CARSE**, low alluvial land
- CASTRAMETATION**, the art of measuring and laying out a camp
- CATERAN**, a Highland robber
- CATTLE**, **SCOTCH**. *See* Highland droves
- CAULD KAIL HET AGAIN**, cold cabbage heated up, a repetition, second dose
- CHAP**, a customer, buyer
- CHAPPE**, a long riding cloak or mantle
- CHAREGITES**, more properly **KHARIJIS**, a puritanical sect or party of Islam, who originated in the 7th century
- CHARLIE OF LIDDESDALE**. *See* Fighting Charlie, etc.
- CHAUDE MELÉE**, the heat of the fight
- CHIOS**, an island off the west coast of Asia Minor
- CHRIST CHURCH**, the college of that name at Oxford
- CHRISTENBURY**, or **CHRISTIANBURY**, **CRAIG**, a hill in the east of Cumberland
- CHRISTIAN MAIDEN BROUGHT SARACENS INTO SPAIN** (p. 278). Count Julian, a vassal of Roderick, king of the Goths, is said to have invited the Moors or Saracens over from Africa into Spain because the king had ravished Florinda his daughter
- CLACHAN**, Highland hamlet
- CLERGY**, **BENEFIT OF**. *See* Benefit of clergy
- COIF**, a small close-fitting hood
- COIL**, noise, fuss, confusion
- CONFITEOR**, I confess it, I admit it
- CONSECRATED BREAD**, to swallow a piece was the ordeal imposed upon those accused of perjury
- CONSTANCE, LADY**, mother of Prince Arthur, in Shakespeare's *King John*, Act iii. sc. 4
- COPTISH**. The Copts were the Christian descendants of the ancient Egyptians
- CORBY CASTLE**. *See* Squire of Corby Castle
- COSTARD**, the head—a term of contempt
- COTE**, to outrun and get before
- COUSIN**, kinsman, on p. 360 it means 'nephew'
- Coz**, contraction for cousin—a familiar term of address
- CRANES, FLIGHT OF**. *See* Phalanx
- CREAGH**, a cattle-lifting raid
- CURTAL**, short
- CYMAR**, a thin, almost transparent tissue
- CYPRUS, KING OF**, Isaac Comnenus, a nephew of the reigning emperor of Byzantium (Constanti-
- nople), who was de-throned by Richard when on his way to Palestine
- DADDLES**, hands
- DAMAVEND**, a mountain in the north of Persia
- DANDIES, FOUR**. *See* Guy Manning, Note 5, p. 428
- DEASIL**, a circuit made in the direction of the sun's course
- DENIS MOUNTJOIE**, the war-cry of the French, in full form *Le Montjoie de St. Denis*, alluding to the hill (Montjoie) near Paris on which St. Denis suffered (joyful) martyrdom
- DESCANT**, a discourse
- DESPARDIEUX**, probably a stronger form of *Par Dieu!* By God
- DICKON**, a diminutive for Richard
- DIMAYET**, or **DUNMYAT**, a prominent hill 3 miles north-east of Stirling
- DISCIPLINE**, a scourge
- DIVAN**, a council
- DOCH-AN-DORROCH**, a parting-cup
- DODDY**, an ox or cow without horns
- DOG, DUEL BETWIXT MAN AND**. *See* Duel, etc.
- DORT**, a Dutch coin =  $\frac{1}{3}$  penny
- DONN, ROB**, was born at Durness in the country of Lord Reay (Sutherlandshire), the head of the clan MacKay, in 1714, was cow-keeper, not cow-herd, to his chief, wrote poems and satires, and died in 1778
- DOUNE FAIR**, held at Doune, about 9 miles north-west of Stirling, early in each November
- DOUR**, stubborn, sulky
- DROMOND**, a large ship or transport vessel
- DROVES, HIGHLAND**. *See* Highland droves
- DUDGEON-DAGGER**, a dagger with a boxwood haft
- DUEL BETWIXT MAN AND DOG** (p. 255), no doubt the fight between the 'dog of Montargis' and the murderer of the animal's master, which took place, however, in 1371. *See* *The World*, No. 113
- DUNNIE-WASSEL**, a Highland gentleman
- DURINDANA**, the sword of Orlando in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*

- EASY, SIR CHARLES**, a character in Colley Cibber's comedy, *The Careless Husband* (1705)
- EBELS**, chief of the jinn, or evil spirits of Mohammedan belief, who was cast out of Paradise by Allah (God) because he refused to worship Adam
- EGYPT AND SYRIA, KING OF**, Saladin, who, whilst lieutenant for Nureddin, emir of Damascus, conquered Egypt (1170-71)
- EKE**, also, likewise
- ELD**, elders, old men
- EL HAKIM**, means 'the physician'
- ELIAS, OUR FOUNDER** (p. 176), according to an old legend, the Carmelite order was founded by Elijah (Elias) the prophet, who was so closely associated with Mount Carmel
- ELDRITCH, or ELDRITCH**, weird, wild, strange
- EMIR**, an independent prince, or the governor of a province
- ENGADDI, or ENGEDI**, on the west shore of the Dead Sea
- ENOW**, enough, several
- ERST**, before
- FAKIR**, a Hindu ascetic or mendicant
- FALCONERIDGE**, in Shakespeare's *King John*
- FAMAGOSTA**, a seaport on the east side of Cyprus, and capital of Isaac, the king whom Richard deposed on his way to the Holy Land
- FANCIES AND GOOD-NIGHTS** the titles of little poems
- FAUN**, a Roman rustic divinity, with short horns, pointed ears, a goat's tail, and cloven feet
- FAUSE**, false, deceitful
- FEEDERS**, backers, encouragers
- FERIATUR LEO**, let the lion be struck down
- FERIDOUN, or FERIDUN**. See Note 3
- FET**, fetched
- FIGHTING CHARLIE OF LIDDESDALE**, an Elliot or an Armstrong, a well-known character in the Border frays towards the end of the 18th century. See *Guy Mannering*, Note 2, p. 425
- FLAYN**, flayed
- FORBAR**, deny, refuse
- FORDS OF FREW**, in the river Forth, near Kippen in Stirlingshire
- FOUR DANDIES OF LUTHER**. See *Guy Mannering*, Note 5, p. 428
- FRANGISTAN**, the country of the Franks, i. e. Europe
- FRANK**, the name given by Orientals to the peoples of Western Europe
- FREAT, or FREIT**, superstitious notion, practice
- FRONT-STALL**, the piece of armour that protected a horse's face
- FUSBERTA, or FUSBERTA**, the sword of Rinaldo in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*
- FYTTE, or FIT**, a song, story in verse
- GABER**, to vie in telling marvellous stories à la Munchhausen
- GAIE SCIENCE**, the art of the minstrel or troubadour
- GAINSTANDER**, one who withstands
- GALEN**, a celebrated ancient Greek physician of the 2d century A. D.
- GALLOWAY NAG**, a strong Scotch cob, originally bred in the old county of Galloway
- GAR**, to make, oblige
- GATE**, way, manner, path
- GAZE-HOUND**, a hound that pursues by sight rather than by scent, a greyhound
- GEAR**, business, affair
- GENU** (pl.), the jinn or evil spirits of Moslem belief
- GRITTERN, or GITTERN**, a stringed instrument of music resembling a guitar
- GIAOUGI, or GYGES**, a Lydian king, who possessed a ring which, when he wore it, rendered him invisible
- GIAOUR**, a contemptuous term applied by Mohammedans to all non-Mohammedans
- GILLIE-WHITEFOOT, or GILLIE-WHITE**, a messenger
- GILPIN, BERNARD**, this Pastor Oberlin of the North of England, a brave, good, and large-hearted man, lived from 1517 to 1583
- GIN**, if
- GINNISTAN**, the mythical land of the jinn or evil spirits
- GLENÆ**, in Dumfriesshire
- GLORIA PATRI**, Glory to the Father
- GLUNAMIE, or GLUNIMIE**, a rough, unpolished Highlander
- GNEW**, gnawed
- GODFREY** (p. 189), or **GODFREY OF BOUILLON**, leader of the first Crusade, declined the crown of Jerusalem, after the capture of the Holy City in 1099, on the plea that he could not wear a crown of gold where his Master had worn one of thorns
- GRAMARYE**, magic or necromancy
- GREYHOUND, SILVER, ON SLEEVE**. See Silver greyhound, etc.
- GUY, KING OF JERUSALEM**, Guy of Lusignan, chosen king of Jerusalem in 1186
- HADGI, or HAJJI**, a Mohammedan who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca
- HADJI BABA**, two romances entitled *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan* (1824), and *Hajji Baba in England* (1828), by James Morier
- HAGGIS**, sheep's liver, heart, etc., minced fine and boiled in a bag with oatmeal, suet, etc.
- HAIR**, a kind of shawl or cloak
- HALLOWE'EN SPELLS**. See Burns's poem, *Hallowe'en*
- HAMAKO**, a person touched with insanity
- HARMONICA**, a musical toy in which notes were produced in and from small metallic reeds or tubes placed in a frame and played by breathing into them
- HAROUN**, Aaron, the brother of Moses
- HEGIRA, or HEJRA**, Mohammed's flight from Mecca on 13th September 622
- HELVOET, or HELLEVOETSLUIS**, a seaport and fortress, about 17 miles from Rotterdam
- HEM**, them
- HENRY THE STERN**, the Emperor Henry VI.
- HIE**, high, noble
- HIGHLAND DROVES** (of cattle), were sold at St. Faith's Fair near Norwich and thence made their

- way to London. The recollection of these droves of Scotch cattle passing through Lincolnshire is not yet (1894) wholly extinct in the fens
- HIPPOCRATES**, perhaps the most celebrated of the ancient Greek physicians, lived in the 5th and 4th centuries B. C.
- HOBBIE NOBLE**. See the ballad in *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. ii.
- HOCH LEBE DER HERZOG LEOPOLD**, Long live Duke Leopold!
- HOFFNARR**, more correctly **HOFFNARR**, court jester
- HOGGED**, with the hair clipped short
- HOLLAN**, holly
- HOMAGE (SCOTTISH) TO ENGLAND** (p. 97), extorted from William the Lion of Scotland, after he was captured at Alnwick by the men of Yorkshire in 1174
- HOOLY AND FAIRLY**, softly and fairly, gently
- HOURIS**, the beautiful damsels that are to wait upon faithful Mohammedans in Paradise
- ILKE**, the same
- IMAUM**, the official who recites the prayers in a mosque, and leads the worshippers in their devotions
- IN ARTICULO MORTIS**, at the point of death
- IN PARICASU**, in the same condition, on the same terms
- IRAK**, Persia, more properly a (western) province of that country
- IRTHING**, a river of Cumberland
- ISAAK**, a celebrated Arab musician, who lived in the reigns of the Caliph Haroun ar-Rashid and his son Al-Mamun
- ISSA BEN MARIAM**, Jesus, the son of Mary
- ISTAKHAR**, an ancient city of southern Persia, near the still older Persepolis, and the capital of the Sassanian dynasty of Persian kings
- JERID**, or **JEREED**, a wooden javelin, five feet long, used in mimic combats
- JERUSALEM, DETHRONED QUEEN OF**, Sybilla, sister and second successor of Baldwin IV., king of Jerusalem, who, when she married Guy of Lusignan in 1186, resigned her crown to him
- JERUSALEM, LATIN KINGDOM OF**, founded by the chiefs of the first Crusade in 1099, destroyed by the Turkish Charismians in 1244
- JONGLEUR**, travelling minstrel who frequented tournaments, castles, and popular festivals
- JOYEUSE SCIENCE**, art of minstrelsy
- JURE DIVINO**, by divine right
- JUSTICE SHALLOW**, in *Henry IV.*, Part II., Act iii. sc. 2, Falstaff describes Shallow. *Fancies and Good-nights* the titles of little poems
- KAISER**, emperor of the Holy Roman Empire
- KEBLA**, the point towards which Mohammedans turn when they pray, i. e. Mecca
- KEN**, to know
- KENNING**, measurable distance, cognizance
- KHIRKHAH**, a dervish's habit or robe
- KYLOES**, Highland black cattle
- LAI**, a short lyric, song, lay
- LANCEKNECHTS, LANDS-KNECHTE, OR LANZ-KNECHTE**, mercenary soldiers armed with pikes and swords, and first organised by the Emperor Maximilian in 1487
- LANERCOST**, a celebrated Augustinian priory, some 16 miles north-east of Carlisle
- LEABHAR-DHU**, a black pocket-book
- LEASING**, fibbing, telling falsehoods
- LELIES**, a corruption of the Arab war-cry, '*La ilaha illa 'Uah*,' i. e. There is no god but God
- LEON**, a Christian kingdom of Spain (10th to 13th cent.)
- LEOPOLD, GRAND DUKE OF AUSTRIA** (p. 115). It was his father Henry, not Leopold himself, who was made 'duke,' and by Frederick I., not Henry the Stern
- LIBBEARD**, leopard
- LINGUA FRANCA**, a language that is used as a common medium of communication
- LIVAND**, living
- LLHU**, a calf
- LOCHABER**, a district in the south of Inverness-shire
- LOCKERBY, or LOCKERBIE**, a parish in Dumfriesshire
- LOGAN, JOHN**, Scottish poet (1748-1788), author of the *Braes of Yarrow*
- LOKMAN**, a mythical personage, variously identified as Balaam, as Job's nephew or grandson, as a Nubian contemporary of David, and the traditional author of a collection of Arabic fables
- LOMBARDY PEDLARS**. The people of the Italian cities of Lombardy were famous traders to all parts of Europe in the times of the Crusades
- LOON**, a fellow, rogue
- LORD OF SPEECH**, the tongue
- LOS**, i. e. *laus*, praise, renowned
- LOUGH**, laughed
- LOUTED**, bent, inclined
- LOVELACE**, the hero of Richardson's novel, *Clarissa Harlowe* (1749)
- LOWER EMPIRE**, the Eastern, Byzantine, or Greek empire
- LYME-HOUND**, a dog held in a leam or strap, a boar-hound
- MAGI**, the priests of the religion of Zoroaster; they practised divination and magic
- MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT**, Truth is great and it will prevail
- MAHOUND**, a contemptuous name for Mahomet, represented as a devil in the mediæval mystery plays of Europe
- MAIN**, a match at cock-fighting
- MANGONEL**, a large catapult for hurling stones
- MANSOUR**, the pen-name of Firdousi, the great Persian poet (940-1020)
- MARABOUT**, a Mohammedan ascetic or saint, especially in North Africa

**MARAVEDI**, a copper coin of Portugal =  $\frac{1}{3}$  penny  
**MARCAT**, market  
**MARCH PARTS**, the borders of England and Scotland, or the marches  
**MARMOSET**, a conceited puppy  
**MARONITES**, an ancient Christian sect of Syria  
**MARTLEMAS**, or **MARTINMAS**, the 11th November, at which season it was formerly the custom to slaughter fat cattle and salt the beef for winter use  
**MAUGIS**, a knight skilled in magic, the hero of the mediæval romance, *Maugis l'Aggremont*  
**MAUN**, must  
**MAZER**, a large wooden drinking-bowl, mounted with silver  
**MEA CULPA**, the fault is mine, I am to blame  
**MELECH RIC**, King Richard  
**MEMENTO MORI**, remember, you must die  
**MENUS PLAISIRS**, little pleasures  
**MERLIN**, the magician in the stories of King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table  
**MEYNIE**, retinue, household  
**MILL**, SHOW HIM THE. *See* show him the mill  
**MINCH MOOR**, between the Yarrow and the Tweed, on the borders of Selkirkshire and Peeblesshire  
**MINNESINGER**, the love-poets and minstrels of mediæval Germany  
**MIRGLIP** (the water-drinker). *See* Weber's *Tales of the East*, vol. iii. p. 556  
**MO**, more  
**MODERAMEN INCUPLATÆ TUTELÆ**, mitigating circumstances in behalf of the accused  
**MODERATOR OF THE ASSEMBLY**, the president or chairman of the General Assembly of the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland  
**MOHAMMED MOHADI**. *See* Twelfth imām  
**MOLLAHS**, the Mohammedan clergy, who interpret the Koran  
**MONOTROCH**, a one-wheeled car or vehicle  
**MONTSERRAT**, or **MONTE**

**SERRATO**, a serrated or saw-edged mountain. This name is given to a fantastically-shaped mountain, 30 miles from Barcelona in Spain. The real Marquis's name was Montferrat, and he was of Italian descent  
**MOOR**, **MOORISH**, taken, incorrectly, as synonymous with Arab, Turk, Saracen (*q. v.*)  
**MORNING**, an early dram  
**MORTIER**, a steel morion or soldier's cap  
**MOSLEMAH**, Moslems or Mohammedans  
**MOUSSA BEN AMRAN**, Moses, the son of Amran. The allusion on p. 183 is to Numbers xx. 11  
**MUEZZIN**, the officer of a mosque who proclaims the hours of prayer from the highest stage of the minaret or tower  
**MUHME**, or more correctly **MUME**, foster-mother, nurse  
**MUMPSIMUS AND SUMPSIMUS**. According to Richard Pace, secretary to Henry VIII., in his *De Fructu Doctrinæ* (p. 80, ed. 1517), an old priest habitually read in his (Latin) breviary *mumpsimus* in mistake for *sumpsimus*; and when the error was pointed out to him, he refused to change his old way of 'pronunciation,' that he had been accustomed to for thirty years, for 'your new-fashioned' way  
**MURREY-COLOURED**, mulberry or dark red  
**NAE**, no  
**NAILER**, TIP HIM THE. *See* Tip him the nailer  
**NAZARENE**, a term applied in contempt to the early Christians, as followers of Jesus of Nazareth  
**NE**, not, nor  
**NIERENSTEIN**, a Rhine wine grown at Nierenstein, 10 miles south of Mainz  
**NOONING**, a repast at noon  
**NOURISSANT**, nourishing  
**OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN**, the head of the Mohammedan sect of the Ishmaelites or Assassins, who practised political assassination as part of

their religious creed. He lived on the mountain of Alamut in Persia  
**OMRAH**, court officer, strictly the title of the twenty-four councillors of the Great Mogul (emperor) of Delhi  
**OO**, one  
**OOP SEYES** (quoth the Dutchman), may be meant for the Dutch equivalent of 'Up it goes!' or more probably is a corruption of 'upsee Dutch,' a kind of strong Dutch ale  
**ORIFLAMME**, the sacred banner of France  
**ORTHEZ**, between Pau and Bayonne in the south of France  
**ORVIETAN**, an antidote to poison, said to have been first compounded at Orvieto in Spain  
**OTIUM**, ease, leisure  
**OUI**, yes; this word was used in the north of France, in contradistinction to *oc* (yes), employed in the south of France  
**OVER-SCUTCHED**, probably over-switched, over-whipped. *See* Henry IV., Part II., Act iii. sc. 2  
**PANEL**, the accused, prisoner at the bar  
**PAR AMOURS**, for love (illicit)  
**PARTES**, divide, share amongst  
**PAR VOIE DU FAIT**, by a duel, by violence  
**PASSANT**, walking—a term in heraldry  
**PAVESSE**, or **PAVISE**, a large triangular shield, covering the entire person  
**PAYNIM**, pagan; **PAYNIMRIE**, heathendom  
**PE GANG**, still go on  
**PENNONCELLE**, a small flag at the end of a spear  
**PERDU**, hidden, concealed  
**PERIAPT**, an amulet, charm  
**PHALANX** (of cranes). These birds usually fly in a wedge-shaped body, a single bird leading the way, closely followed by two others, and they by three more, and so on. *Compare* Schiller's *Kranich des Ibykus*  
**PIOKTHANK**, an officious and ungrateful person, a busybody



- PILAU, a dish of mutton, kid, or fowl, boiled with rice, butter, and spices
- POET LAUREATE, Southey, who wrote *Thalaba* (1801)
- POUNCET-BOX, a box to hold perfumes
- PRECEPTORIES, religious houses of the Templars
- PRESTER JOHN, a mythical Christian priest-king ruling somewhere in the far east of Asia, later identified with the Christian king of Abyssinia
- PRETTY MAN, a stout, brave fellow
- PRIX JUSTE, fair price
- PROFESSORS OF THE FANCY, professional pugilists
- PROMETHEUS, according to one version of the legend made men out of clay and water
- PRÔNE, extolled, cried up
- PROVEDITORE, a high officer of state of Venice
- QUEAN, a hussy
- QUOD, quoth, said
- QUOD ERAT DEMONSTRANDUM, which was to be proved
- QUOTHA, forsooth
- RAFF, a worthless fellow
- RASHID, an observatory
- RED-HOT GLOBE OF IRON, was carried a certain distance as an ordeal to determine guilt or innocence
- ROOD, a cross, crucifix
- ROTE, a stringed instrument played by turning a wheel
- RUDAS, rough, rude
- RUDPIKI, probably a slip for Rudiki, a poet who lived at the court of Bokhara and Samarcand, in the 10th century. The sentiment in the text (p. 27) was, however, uttered by the great Persian poet Hafiz
- RUGGING AND RIVING, tugging and tearing, i.e. the wild doings of Border life
- RUNT, a young ox or cow
- RUSTAN, or RUSTEM, the traditional hero of Persia, was a brave and a faithful general
- SACQUE, a kind of lady's gown, with a long loose back depending from the collar
- ST. LUCIA, an island in the West Indies
- ST. MUNGO, also ST. KENTIGERN, was guided by two untamed bulls to Glasgow, which he made the head of his see
- ST. NINIAN, this old Scottish saint's shrine was at Whithorn (*Candida Casa*) in Wigtownshire, and was long a famous pilgrimage
- SAIR NEWS, bad news
- SALADIN, a TURK (p. 106). Saladin was by birth a Kurd, but he ruled the Turks of Asia Minor, who were the most inveterate foes of the Crusaders
- SALAM ALICUM, Peace be with you, the usual Mohammedan greeting
- SAMITE, a special kind of gold cloth
- SANTON, a Moslem saint
- SARACEN, is not, correctly, the name of a nation, but the common designation which the Crusaders gave to all their Moslem enemies
- SARACENS BROUGHT INTO SPAIN (p. 278). See Christian maiden, etc.
- SARBACANE, tube for blowing small poisoned darts through, blow-gun
- SATHANAS, Satan, devil
- SAWNEY, or SANDY, a general nickname for a Scotsman
- SCHREIK. See Old Man of the Mountain
- SCHIRAZ, an ancient and renowned city of Persia
- SCOTCH CATTLE. See Highland droves
- SCRUB, in George Farquhar's *Beaux' Stratagem* (1707), Act iii. sc. 1
- SECRET, a shirt of mail worn under the armour
- SELJOOK, or SELJUK, the name, properly, of a ruling dynasty of the Turks, who are by race quite distinct from the Kurds. Saladin's father was a provincial governor under the Seljuk rulers
- SELT, sold
- SEVEN OCEANS, according to Arab geographers, there are seven earths
- SEWARD, MISS ANNA, called 'the Swan of Lichfield,' a poetess and blue-stockings, who corresponded with Scott
- SHAG, stuff of coarse cloth or rough hair
- SHALM, or SHAWM, a kind of clarinet or hautboy
- SHEERKOH, or SHIRKOH, the name of Saladin's uncle, and a Kurd by race
- SHIELING, a Highland hut
- SHOW HIM THE MILL, begin the (prize) fight
- SIC ITUR AD ASTRA, This is the path to heaven, the motto attached to the armorial bearings of the Canongate, Edinburgh
- SICUT PICTURA POESIS, painting has something in common with poetry
- SIDDIM, VALLEY OF, where Sodom and Gomorrah formerly stood, now in great part covered by the Dead Sea
- SILLERMILLS, or SILVERMILLS, now a northern suburb of Edinburgh
- SILVAN, silvan or rural divinity
- SILVER GREYHOUND ON THE SLEEVE, the badge of the king's messenger or war-rat-officer
- SIMOOM, a hot, suffocating wind that blows in the deserts of Africa and Arabia
- SKENE-DHU, a black knife or dirk
- SLEE, slay
- SLOT, track, footprints
- SMITHFIELD (keep the rounds at), show endurance in a prize-fight, presumably during the great St. Bartholomew Fair, held at Smithfield in September every year
- SNEESHING, snuff
- SNUFF-MULL, snuff-box
- SOLDAN, or SOUDAN, sultan
- SOLIMAU BEN DAUD, Solomon, the son of David
- SOOTE, sweet
- SRAEWIFF, fortune-teller
- SPAIN, SARACENS BROUGHT INTO (p. 278). See Christian maiden, etc.
- SPECTRAL HUNTSMAN, in the poem *Theodore and Honoria*, translated by Dryden from the Italian of Boccaccio
- SPEECH, LORD OF, the tongue
- SPIOES, legs
- SPORRAN, Highlander's pouch of goat-skin, used as a purse



**SPRACK**, lively  
**SPRUCHSPRECHER**, sayer of sayings

**SQUIRE OF COREY CASTLE**, a Howard. Corby Castle stands 4 miles east of Carlisle

**STAGSHAW BANK**, 4 miles from Hexham, and close to the Roman Wall, where a much-frequented fair was held

**STAIR, EARL OF**, the second earl fought under Marlborough in Flanders from 1702 to 1709

**STANDARD, BATTLE OF THE**, fought near Northallerton in Yorkshire, between the English and the Scotch led by David I. in 1138, the latter suffering defeat

**STANWIX**, a village immediately north of Carlisle

**START AND OWELOUP**, to break away and leap the roadside fence

**STOOP, swoop of a falcon**

**STOT**, a bullock

**STOUND**, a short while

**STRADIOTS, or STRATIOTS**, light cavalry recruited by Venice in Albania and Morea (Greece)

**STYPTIC**, a medicine to check the flow of blood from a wound

**SUMMAT**, something

**SUMPSIMUS**. See *Mumpsimus*, etc.

**SUPLE, or SOUPLE**, a stout cudgel

**SURCOAT**, a long loose garment worn over armour

**SWARTE**, black, swarthy

**SWILKE**, of such like, of that kind

**SWYCHE**, such

**TABARD**, a long tunic or upper cloak

**TABOUR**, a kind of kettledrum

**TABOURET**, a low seat without arms or back; a tabour, *i.e.* a musical instrument

**TAISHATARAGH**, the gift of second sight

**TARLANCE**, delay

**TECHIR**, the formula *Allah akbar* (God is great), the Arab war-cry

**TENT** (a wound), to examine or probe

**TERMAGAUNT**, an Oriental spirit of violent and tumultuous behaviour,

represented as a devil in the mediæval mystery plays of Europe

**TEUTONIC KNIGHTS**, a religious, military order, founded in Palestine in 1190 (1197), but from 1225 to 1386 engaged in fighting the heathen Prussians and Lithuanians, and still (1894) in existence as an (aristocratic) secular order, with branches in Vienna and Utrecht

**THALABA**, by Southey, who was poet laureate, 1813 to 1843

**'THE HORRID PLOUGH'** etc. (p. 354), from Logan's poem, *A Tale*, but somewhat altered

**THEODORE**, in the poem *Theodore and Honoria*, translated by Dryden from the Italian of Boccaccio

**TILBURINA**, the extravagantly love-lorn maid in Sheridan's *Critic* (1779)

**TIP HIM THE NAILER**, give him the finishing blow

**TISHBITE**, Elijah the prophet

**TOLPACH**, a Tartar hat made of black lamb's-wool

**TOMAHOURICH**. Compare *Tomnahurich*, or the Hill of the Fairies, near Inverness

**TOPHET, or TOPHETH**, a valley near Jerusalem, where the filth and sewage of the city were deposited and burnt

**TOPSMAN**, head drover

**TOY**, a trifle, means of diversion

**TRAINED**, enticed away by a trick or stratagem

**TRAQUAIR**, on the Tweed, in Peeblesshire

**TROUVEUR**, poets of chivalry in Northern France

**TRYSTE**, a fair

**TUCK** (of drum), beat

**TURKS**, regarded in this novel as synonymous with Saracens

**TWELFTH IMAUM, or CALIPH**, named Mohammed, disappeared when only twelve years of age. The Mohammedans expect him to return some day, to inaugurate a reign of peace and happiness. This expected prophet

is called the Mahdi (Mohadi)

**TYKE**, a cur, ill-bred dog

**TYNED**, lost

**ULEMAT**, a Moslem ecclesiastic of high rank

**UNTENDED** (conscience), one the pain of which is not lessened

**VENERIE**, the chase

**VENETIAN SKIPPER**s. The Venetians made great gains by shipping the Crusaders and their supplies to the East

**VERA CRUX**, the true cross

**VERT**, a game forest

**VIS**, face, visage

**VIS MAJOR**, stronger force

**WAES ME**, woe is me

**WAITS**, hautboys, oboes

**WANCHANOX**, unlucky, dangerous

**WARLOCK**, a wizard

**WATER-DRINKER MIRGLIP**.

See *Mirglip*

**WETZ**, knoweth

**WHEN MAIR**, a few more

**WHITSON TRYSTE**, a Whitsuntide fair held near Wooler in Northumberland, 20 miles from Berwick-on-Tweed

**WIDDERSINS**, contrary direction to the sun's course

**WILLIELMUS**, William, *i.e.* William III.

**WIMPLE**, a veil or hood

**WINNA**. See *Wunna*

**WO**, undone, in distress

**WODE, or WUD**, beside himself, insane

**WOODCOCK OF MY SIDE**, that's a point scored to folly.

*Woodcock* was a synonym for a foolish man, a simpleton

**WOOLER FAIR**, probably the fair held at Whitsunbank Hill, 2 miles from Wooler. See also *Whitson Tryste*

**WREST**, a key for tuning a harp

**WUNNA, WINNA**, will not

**YACOUN, or ZAKUM**, in Mohammedan faith, a tree of the infernal

- regions, that produces heads of demons instead of fruit
- YEMEN**, the most southerly province of Arabia
- YEZED BEN SOPHAN**, one of the Arab generals sent to conquer Syria, though the real head of the invading army was Khalid (the sword of the Lord)
- YSOP**, or **ÆSOP**, the fable-teller, is traditionally said to have been deformed and a monster of ugliness
- YSOUF BEN YAGOUBE**, Joseph, the son of (the patriarch) Jacob
- ZABLESTAN**, or **ZABULISTAN**, is Ghazni, in modern Afghanistan
- ZECHIN**, or **ZECCHINO**, sequin, a gold coin of Venice worth about 9s. 4d.
- ZENANA**, the woman's apartments in an Oriental house
- ZOHAK**, or **ZOHAK**. See Note 3,

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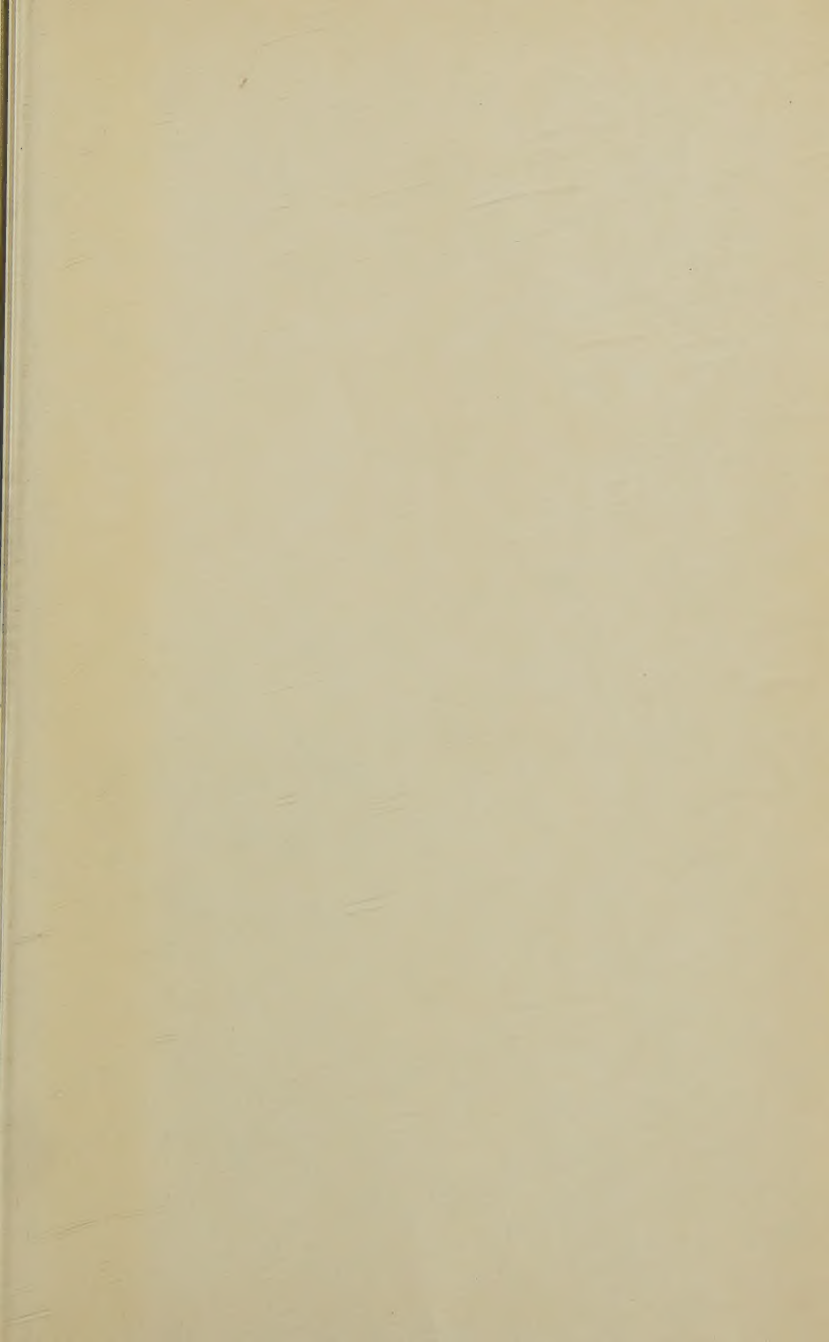
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